DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 476 458 JC 030 283

AUTHOR	Linstrom, Eric L.
TITLE	Public Trust/Private Interest: Practical and Philosophical Issues for Community Colleges and Their Contract Education Programs.
PUB DATE	2002-03-21
NOTE	187p.; Doctoral dissertation submitted to Oregon State University for Ed.D. in Community College Leadership.
PUB TYPE	Dissertations/Theses - Doctoral Dissertations (041) -- Information Analyses (070)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01/PC08 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Access to Education; *Business; *Community Colleges; Comprehensive Programs; Contract Training; *Cooperative Programs; *Economic Development; *Educational Finance; Institutional Mission; Organizational Climate; Organizational Culture; Two Year Colleges
IDENTIFIERS	*San Jose Evergreen Community College District CA

ABSTRACT

This study proposes to understand the major practical and philosophical issues faced by community colleges as they continue to expand the economic development roles of their contract education programs. The author argues that these practical and philosophical issues are influenced by the convergence of three key factors: (1) many community colleges are struggling with the near- and long-term consequences of chronic underfunding; (2) community colleges are being asked to take on a larger economic development role than ever before; and (3) community colleges are being pressured to look toward increased levels of collaboration with the commercial or corporate elements within their communities as a way to meet funding issues and economic development responsibilities. The author professes a conflicted reaction to the role of the private business sector in the community college, and thus aims to find a point of reconciliation among the conflicting viewpoints of advancing the interests of society versus the myopic pursuit of profits. This study uses a phenomenological method in an attempt to gain an insider's perspective on the issue. The study was conducted at Evergreen Valley/San Jose Community College District, California, and the Institute for Business Performance. The author concludes that the study did not serve to decrease his perception of the conflicts inherent in these collaborations. (Contains 72 references.) (NB)

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Public Trust / Private Interest: Practical and Philosophical Issues For Community Colleges and Their Contract Education Programs

Eric L. Lindstrom

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A DISSERTATION

submitted to

Oregon State University

in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the
degree of

Doctor of Education in Community College Leadership

IC030283

Presented March 21, 2002
Commencement June 2002

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AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION OF

Eric L. Lindstrom for the degree of Doctor of Education in Education presented on March 21, 2002.

Title: Public Trust / Private Interest: Practical and Philosophical Issues For Community Colleges and Their Contract Education Programs

Abstract approved: _____
George Copa

Community colleges are being pressured to increase their direct support of the economic development agendas of their communities, their states, and even the nation. These pressures develop both externally and internally, and are exacerbated when increased demands for access to community college education must be met with chronically flat-lined or underfunded community college budgets. In order to deal effectively with these pressures, community colleges may have to increase the considerable degree to which they already collaborate with the private interests within their communities. Contract education programs are one of the more powerful collaborative devices available to community colleges. But increasing their emphasis on contract education presents practical and philosophical issues for community colleges, and may even put their traditionally comprehensive missions at risk. This study suggests that the degree to which a community college is able to resolve those issues and maintain a comprehensive mission is heavily dependant upon the ability of the top leadership to balance the values and interests of the multiple organizational cultures that make up the community college and its immediate environment.

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Public Trust / Private Interest: Practical and Philosophical Issues For Community Colleges and Their Contract Education Programs

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

American community colleges are caught between the anvil of increasing demands and the hammer of diminishing resources. The demands are longstanding, come from critics and supporters alike (Brint & Karabel, 1994; Dougherty, 1994; Levin, 2000; Pincus, 1994), and include (a) higher levels of accountability, (b) increased services to the community, (c) expanded access, (d) greater transfer opportunities for the less advantaged, (e) all-around higher academic quality, and (f) an increased role in the economic development efforts of their communities (Communities, 2001), the country (Bragg, 2001, p. 2), and even the larger world community (Folsom, 1999, p. 13).

Against the demands for more of everything moves an almost relentless reduction in levels of federal, state, and local funding for much of post-secondary education (Healy, 1999, p. 38; Van de Werf, 1999, p. 42). These pressures are keenly felt in states like California, where years of chronic underfunding (Benjamin & Carroll, 1998, p. 14) have forced virtually every community college district to make major and painful adjustments in expenditure strategies (Kimberling, 1999, pp. 250-265) in order to pursue their traditionally comprehensive missions.

Among the strategies used by community colleges to meet the demands and pressures outlined above is the development of closer ties with private business through a heavier reliance on collaborative activities (NAB, 2001, p. 3). These

activities can range from the development of joint-use or joint-venture agreements (Miller, Brown & Dannis, 2000), to the development of degree programs designed to meet the personnel needs of a particular industry (Swindle, 1999).

Contract education, formerly just a small segment of the community service function of most comprehensive community colleges (Cohen & Brawer, 1989, p. 268), is emerging as a potentially powerful tool for the development and implementation of collaborative activities with private business (R. Kuhn, personal communication, June 29, 2001). But the entrepreneurial focus of contract education programs can create practical and philosophical issues for community colleges (Dougherty & Bakia, 2000), especially with regard to the impact that they may have on the traditionally comprehensive community college mission itself (Bailey & Averianova, 1998, p. 13).

Problem Statement

The purpose of this study is to understand the major practical and philosophical issues faced by community colleges as they continue to grow the economic development roles of their contract education programs. These practical and philosophical issues are influenced by the convergence of three key factors: First, many community colleges are struggling with the near- and long-term consequences of chronic underfunding. Second, community colleges are being asked to take on a larger economic development role than ever before. Third, community colleges are being pressured to look toward increased levels of

collaboration with the commercial or corporate elements within their communities as a way to meet funding issues and economic development responsibilities.

The practical issues (Dougherty & Bakia, 2000, pp. 225-235) stem from the fact that the entrepreneurial focus and operational style of a contract education program tend to separate it, both organizationally and culturally, from the other functional areas of its community college. This separation, in turn, can diminish the degree to which the contract education program is able to realize its own agenda and simultaneously support the broader agendas of the community college's degree programs (Bailey & Averianova, 1998, p. 14). The philosophical issues develop primarily from concerns (Clowes & Levin, 1994, p. 460; Cohen & Brawer, 1989, p. 297) over the impact that a stronger focus on the vocational and/or economic-development functions of the traditionally comprehensive mission of the community college might work to reduce the importance and effectiveness of other traditional functions, most notably the transfer function.

Bogart (1994, p. 62) contends that, "by definition and practice, the mission of the American community college is the most important element of its being." In the same passage, he suggests that this mission should be such that the community college and its various functions become "so closely interwoven with the life of the community that it becomes difficult to determine where college programs end and community projects begin." In acknowledgement of how diverse the individual interests and corporate capacities within the community can be, Bogart then goes on to advance a broad view of the community college in which at least six major

areas of institutional endeavor are involved: "(1) governance and leadership, (2) student development, (3) instruction and faculty, (4) curriculum and programs, (5) economic development, and (6) lifelong learning" (Bogart, p. 63). Cohen and Brawer (1989, p. 16) have identified five curricular functions within this broad and traditional perspective, including "academic transfer, vocational and/or technical education, continuing education, remedial education, and community service."

Contract Education

Contract education has been described (Cohen & Brawer, 1989, p. 256; Lorenzo, 1994, p. 117) as being part of the community service function of the broad and comprehensive community college mission described above. By using contract education programs to support the efforts of business and industry to develop and maintain an effective workforce, community colleges can promote the economic development function of their missions, and support their vocational/technical and continuing education functions at the same time. Similarly, by using contract education programs to provide a range of training and developmental services to other publicly supported organizations within the community, community colleges can advance lifelong learning, and support the continuing and remedial education functions of their broad-based and comprehensive missions.

Because they operate outside of the kinds of constraints imposed by accreditation agencies and other regulatory bodies on the for-credit programs

within the community college (Dougherty & Bakia, 2000), contract education programs can perform in a manner that comes close to fulfilling Bogart's notion (p. 4 above) that the community college should be "...so closely interwoven with the life of the community that it becomes difficult to determine where college programs end and community projects begin." But, because of their emphasis on economic development and training, contract education programs are sometimes seen as potential contributors to the ongoing erosion of the traditionally comprehensive community college mission (Bailey & Averianova, 1998, p. 13). Additionally, they sometimes place an unwelcome strain on limited resources, and are usually not very well integrated into the other functions of the community college. If managed in a way that contributes to the erosion of the traditionally broad mission of the community college, contract education programs can have a decidedly negative impact on the ability of a community college to balance the Public Trust with the Private Interest.

Public Trust / Private Interest

The central focus of study is one of the most challenging of all kinds of socio-economic relationships: The relationship created when an instrument of the Public Trust – a community college district in the case of this study – and organizations operating on behalf of Private Interest – for-profit corporations primarily – come together in order to advance the economic development needs of their community, their region, and/or their nation. Public Trust in the context of

this study represents the notion that, by assuring access and opportunity to education for the general citizenry through the maintenance of a multi-faceted mission, the American community college functions in a way that protects and cares for the social and economic well being of the public. The comprehensive community college mission, and the varied functions related to that mission, are crucial to the maintenance of the Public Trust because a varied mission makes it possible for the community college to meet the diverse educational and training needs of an equally diverse population. As Cohen and Brawer put it:

> A community college has many purposes. It is a community resource providing short-cycle activities for its constituents' personal interests; cultural upgrading for the community; literacy development, in which it attempts to remedy the failings of other schools; and economic development, in which it serves as a channel for state development funds and industrial training programs. For most of its students, the college serves as a connector between secondary schools and universities or as a career preparation center assisting them in job entry and job upgrading. (1989, p. 376)

Private Interest, in the context of this study, refers to the advancement of a corporate concept of self-interest. Adam Smith explains self interest in brutally simple terms: "It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their self interest. We address ourselves, not to their humanity, but to their self-love, and never talk to them of our necessities, but of their advantages" (Heilbroner, 1999, p. 55). Here Private Interest is understood to be interested, first and foremost, in the advancement of profit. This is not to say that Private Interest operates without

conscience, or without regard for the Public Trust, but only to point out that, as Heilbroner says:

> The laws of the market place are like the laws that explain how a spinning top stays upright....for all the attributes of modern-day economic society, the great forces of self-interest and competition, however watered down or hedged about, still provide basic rules of behavior that no participant in a market system can afford to disregard. (1999, p. 59)

By providing multiple access points and pathways to education for the oppressed and the disadvantaged, the community college has proven itself (Rendon, 2000, p.1) to be highly effective in promoting the Public Trust. At the same time, through its activities in support of workforce and economic development agendas, the community college has been equally effective in addressing both the "needs of the middle class and the engines of the economy" (Levin, 2000, p.18).

Dualistic Mission

By functioning in a manner that protects the Public Trust and yet simultaneously advances the Private Interest, community colleges reflect a duality of mission inherent in American higher education since at least the conclusion of the American Revolution. The period immediately following the Revolution was one of the most turbulent periods of economic, technological, and social change in the history of the United States. Cohen (1998, p. 51) calls this period (1790-1869) "The Emergent Nation Era," and notes that it was a time when, "the notion of college as a good personal investment overtook the idea of college as a social

investment" (Cohen, p. 94). Tocqueville visited America in the middle of this Era (1831-1832), and reflected on the "practical" nature of the American people, as well as on the impact this national characteristic had on their approach to education:

> The spirit of America is averse to general ideas and it does not seek theoretical discoveries....The Americans have lawyers and commentators, but no jurists; and they furnish examples rather than lessons to the world....Education has taught them the utility of instruction....In New England, every citizen receives the elementary notions of human knowledge....it is extremely rare to find a man imperfectly acquainted with all these things, and a person wholly ignorant of them is a kind of phenomenon. (de Tocqueville, 2000, pp. 363-366)

Articulated in this era was the idea that moral and civic goals were tied to goals more oriented towards the vocational or economic aspects of life. While the young were expected to learn how to behave as responsible and religious citizens, they were also expected to behave as "persons chiefly devoted to work and business" (Pangle & Pangle, 1993, p. 101). This duality of purpose for American education created a balance between the Public Trust – those assets, spiritual and philosophical, shared by the *people* comprising a democratic society – and the Private Interest – the right of *individuals* to engage in the "pell-mell pursuit of personal ambition" (Appleby, 2001, p. 256).

An Evolving Mission

The continuing dualism of Public Trust and Private Interest in American higher education is reflected in the ongoing evolution (Clowes & Levin, 1994, p. 459) of the mission and curriculum of the American community college movement. In its earliest iterations, the curriculum of the community college was dominated by

the liberal arts – a domination that reflected the fact that it was originally envisioned as being part of a "pre-collegiate or secondary education" (Baker, 1994, p. 7). But even in the early days of the 20th Century, when its major purpose was to provide access and economy for students focused on a baccalaureate or professional level of education, the vocational function of the community college was an important one (Bragg, 2001, p.1). This duality of *curriculum* helped to insure a duality of *purpose* for education and training, and the community college found itself perfectly situated to provide important support for both the Public Trust and the Private Interest.

The vocational function of the community college continued to grow in its importance, and by the late 1960's had reached parity with the transfer function (Cohen & Brawer, 1989, p. 18). The comprehensiveness of the community college mission also grew, however, and continuing education, community services, and remedial and developmental education became established as functional areas for most community colleges. Today, however, it is possible that an increasing emphasis on the role of vocational/occupational education in furthering the economic interests of the nation may tend to upset the balance between Public Trust and Private Interest by working in ways that may erode the comprehensive mission of the community college (Bailey & Averianova, 1998, p. 1).

Community colleges already figure significantly in the economic development of the country by being deeply involved in supporting American business and industry through the training and education of what Bragg (2001, p. 5)

calls "the midskilled workforce." Vocational and technical training and education are provided by the community colleges through a variety of services including tech-prep, occupational, school-to-work, adult and continuing education, and contract education programs. But, as significant as the role of the community colleges has been in the advancement of the nation's agenda for economic development in the past, there is increasing interest (Zeiss, 1998, p. 3) in seeing them become even more deeply involved in collaborating with private business in the future. In contrast to the broader goals of education, the pressure to collaborate with the corporate sector frequently carries with it an emphasis on "...training for occupational preparation, often narrowly defined...(in which)...the cleavage between education and training persists, to the detriment of all" (Grubb, 2001, p. 28). Contract education programs are criticized (Dougherty & Bakia, 2000, p.233) for being an example of this cleavage in action.

An Expanding Role

Beginning in the South in the 1960's, and then spreading at an increasing rate in the last twenty years (Dougherty & Bakia, 2000, p.196), the role of contract education services within the broader vocational education mission of the community college has become a common feature of the community college landscape. Today 90 percent of all community colleges (Dougherty & Bakia, 2000, p. 198) provide contract training to both private and public organizations – growth that reflects the increasingly critical role that community colleges are playing in meeting the economic and social services needs of their communities (Folsom, B.,

1999, pp.13-17). This considerable breadth is offset to some extent by the fact that contract education efforts at most community colleges are not all that deep or extensive. Surveys conducted in 1994 showed that contract education students made up approximately 18 percent of total headcount enrollments (non-credit and credit) in the median two-year college (Dougherty & Bakia, 2000, p. 201). At the same time, however, some community colleges have made contract education an important element of their missions and their strategic planning processes. One such example is the Evergreen Valley / San Jose City Community College District in California's Silicon Valley, where meeting the community service objectives of its comprehensive community college mission has taken on some interesting twists (K. Wesson, personal communication, 29 June, 2001).

The California Context

Nowhere do the pressures and issues faced by community colleges stand out in such stark relief as they do in California. Indeed, it is a sad irony that a state that was once such a leader in its approach to community college education is now struggling desperately to find ways to adequately fund its increasingly jeopardized community college system (Benjamin & Carroll, 1998, p. 17). Accordingly, in the process of looking at potential sites for this study, I soon determined that a California location might present an excellent opportunity to come into direct contact with a community college immersed in the process of meeting the pressures and dealing with the issues outlined above.

The Evergreen Valley/San Jose City Community College District was chosen for this study because in 1988 it developed a relatively unique way to manage many of the practical difficulties and organizational tensions typically encountered when a community college attempts to collaborate with the private sector: It established a totally separate and freestanding organization to handle the delivery of its workforce oriented contract education services. Called the Institute for Business Performance (IBP), this organization operates essentially as a freestanding business, and attempts to look, act, and operate very much like the private sector organizations with which it collaborates. While many other contract education arms of community colleges in California have been given considerable autonomy, and have even been housed in separate facilities, none have been set up to look and behave so much like a for-profit organization (R. Kuhn, personal communication, 31 June, 2001).

At bottom the IBP was developed in order to better meet the workforce development needs of the Silicon Valley (A. Woods, personal communications, 30 June, 2001), and was established in the hope of overcoming many of the obstacles (Cohen & Brawer, 1989, p.274; Grosz, 1995, p. 15) that typically impede or diminish the effectiveness of a community college's efforts to develop and implement contract education. As such, the IBP was an extreme solution (A. Woods, personal communication, 29 June, 2001) to a difficult set of problems – internal and external – faced by a community college district operating in an extremely complex geographical, economic, and political region of America – The

Silicon Valley of California. While the IBP has had its share of ups and downs – and while many of the conflicts and controversies that surrounded it in the beginning of its development continue to be issues for it today – it has shown itself (K. Wesson, personal communication, 30 June, 2001) to be a useful innovation in the contract education arena, and other community colleges may profit from developing similar structures for their own contract education efforts.

Value of the Study

This study can inform practice for those who are charged with managing and leading contract-education programs in support of the comprehensive mission of the community college. By highlighting the practical and philosophical issues faced by the SJECCD and IBP, this study can provide insights into how those issues have been addressed in the past and how they may subsequently be dealt with in the future. While these insights are specific to the District itself, the issues themselves may be generalized to other community colleges within California, which may add to the potential contribution this study can make to the development of a deeper understanding of the complexities involved in using contract education programs to support the traditionally comprehensive missions of California's community colleges.

Finally, by discussing the philosophical issues inherent in the community college's support of both the Public Trust and the Private Interest, this study may be able to add to the ongoing debate over the community college mission itself. This debate is characterized by Bailey and Averianova (1998) as being polarized,

with supporters of the traditionally broad and comprehensive mission on one side, and critics of that view who believe that "community colleges have lost their way, abandoning missions that should form the foundation of a democratic society, and squandering effort and resources in an attempt to be all things to all people" (Bailey and Averianova, 1998, p. 1). Because of its entrepreneurial focus and its emphasis on collaboration with private business, contract education is seen by some of these critics as "a threat to the traditional educational values and...the traditional functions of transfer and remedial education" (Bailey & Averianova, 1998, p. 13). But that view may sell short the potential role that contract education could potentially play in support of the community service function of the community college mission.

Benefits of Collaboration

It is easy for a community college to attract private sector interest, particularly with regard to the purchasing power it wields (Miller, Brown & Dannis, 2000, p. 2). Even a small community college contains an almost captive population of potential consumers large enough to be of interest to the purveyors of everything from soft drinks to high-end computers. If a private sector enterprise isn't in the business of selling goods, its interest in forming a relationship with the community college may still be high. After all, the community college provides a wide range of services to its faculty, staff, and students that are frequently outsourced (Wood, 2000, p. 2) to local, or even national, providers. The community college can also attract the attention of those in the real estate business,

either by being in the market for new properties, developing or leasing existing ones, or being in the process of divesting itself of non-producing resources. Relationships with the community college based on its power as a purchaser, or provider of goods and services, or as a real estate enterprise, are crucial to local, regional, and even national private interests. But equally important, are relationships based upon the community college's ability to provide what is, without doubt, that resource most sought after by private sector businesses of all kinds: the highly skilled employee (NAB, 2001, p. 3). In this regard, contract education programs are typically perceived by business as providing benefit because they: (a) provide lower cost training than many private sector competitors, (b) generally tend to be highly responsive to employer input, (c) are more academically grounded than other kinds of training services, and (d) are considered to be more reliable than many of their private competitors (Dougherty & Bakia, 2000, pp. 212-215).

Some of the potential benefits a community college can gain from an effective relationship with a private sector business are nearly identical to those gained by the private sector itself. Just as the private sector collaborator seeks assistance in developing a workforce that has the technical and intellectual capabilities needed to make it competitive within the global marketplace, so too does the community college (Gahn & Twombly, 2001, p. 260). Of particular interest to the community college are a variety of prime corporate assets, including internships, state of the art technology, potential faculty members, content experts

for advisory committees, potential students, specialized equipment and/or facilities, and even cash revenues (Bailey & Averianova, 1998, p. 26). Where contract education activities are involved, fees charged for training services are of considerable value to the community colleges, even when the contract education organization itself is not allowed by state law to keep any excess revenues it may be able to generate (Miller, Brown, & Dannis, 2000, p. 3). These benefits of collaboration are in addition to the employment resource that local businesses and industries can provide for graduates of the community college's various degree, diploma, and job-skills training programs.

Risks of Collaboration

While the potential benefits of collaborations between the community college and private business are considerable, there are also significant risks associated with such enterprises. One kind of risk falls into what can be generally described as the legal context, and is encountered in any enterprise where personal fortune, corporate gain, and/or political advantage can be realized by one or more of the participants. A vast body of federal, state, and local laws (Kaplin & Lee, 1995, pp. 911-967) exists to protect both public and private sector interests from the potential for misconduct or malfeasance that inevitably accompanies partnerships, joint ventures, and other business dealings between their respective organizations. These laws cover a wide variety of business and/or educational items including the development and implementation of contracts, sales and/or service agreements, real estate sales, construction of facilities, creation of auxiliary

enterprises, research and development agreements, and a host of potential tax and anti-trust related issues. Additionally, state governments and community college associations produce guidelines and other support materials (Miller, Brown, & Dannis, 2000) that community colleges can use to help them weave their way through the task of setting collaborative endeavors.

Other risks stem from the fact that by being entrepreneurial themselves, contract education programs frequently end up cut off culturally and organizationally from the other functional areas of the community college (Dougherty & Bakia, 2000, p. 231). This can significantly limit both their ability to respond effectively to the needs of their private clients, and their ability to support the more traditional programs on the community college campus. Furthermore, because contract education programs are not usually funded from the community college's regular apportionment, there is always the possibility, in hard times at least, that the resource-needs of the contract education program may not be offset by the fees it charges. In that event, the maintenance of the contract education program may have a negative impact on the ability of the community college to fully fund its other more traditional functions (L. Carbajal, personal communication, 30 June, 2001).

Finally, the degree to which the community colleges are becoming increasingly focused on entrepreneurial and/or economic development activities such as contract education is worrisome to some (L. Albert, personal communication, 18 July, 2001), partly because these activities are so often focused

on training for the workforce than education for the lifetime, and partly because they are perceived to be part of an agenda that makes community colleges an extension of the market place.

The Faculty Senate for California's community colleges addresses the risks of collaboration with industry in clear and strong terms:

> The call for "partnerships with industry" should be harkened to with great caution....this call easily translates into the colonization of colleges for the purposes of producing profits for business....The danger for the community colleges is that they will simply wind up taking over the employee training function for local industries. ("A Faculty Perspective," 1998, p. 17)

The Senate goes on to say that it sees deeper ties with the private sector, and an increased focus on a corporate approach to education, as being part of an agenda that would "...codify knowledge and make colleges an extension of the marketplace....It is in fact a ploy to extend corporate welfare, a call, in short for community colleges to take on employee training for the local industry....(and) would make students the pawns in someone else's game" ("A Faculty Perspective," p. 19).

Becoming One

My interest in this subject developed initially as a result of my experiences as a program director at a nationally accredited two-year for-profit college. When the administration of the college first advanced the idea of seeking regional accreditation, I found myself asking, "Why? What on earth do we have to gain by becoming part of *that* culture? Do you realize how much longer it will take us to

get our new programs to market?" These concerns were elevated by the knowledge that: (a) this was serious change and would dramatically impact every assumption and practice on the campus; (b) a close and meaningful relationship between two distinctly different organizational cultures cannot fail to change both of them; and (c) you cannot expect to have anything like a superficial relationship with a regional accrediting body (Lindstrom, 2000). Focusing on the degree to which those changes might require anything like serious adjustments on my part, I naturally argued vehemently against them. Now, almost a dozen years later, and as the Dean of a regionally accredited four-year for-profit institution, I realize how right I was: Getting new products to market *does* take longer! But more importantly, conducting business as part of a regionally accredited four-year institution has significantly changed my way of thinking about the relationship between business and education – particularly publicly supported education.

As I reflect on the conflicting arguments for or against increased levels of "partnering" between community colleges and Corporate America (e.g., Swindle, 1999, versus "A Faculty Perspective," 1999), I worry. Entering into deeper levels of meaningful commerce with the private sector may be part of what it will take to keep the community colleges fiscally viable. But deeper levels of collaboration with business *will* change the community college (Levin, 2000, p. 3). A public institution simply cannot have a *meaningful* relationship with Corporate America that will leave its core principles untouched. That is why, I think, contract education and other kinds of collaborative activities between the Public Trust and

the Private Interest can (and should) generate so much hope and so much concern: They both sustain and threaten the dualistic goals inherent in the community college mission. Beginning from this worried stance, then – but hoping to put most of my concerns to rest – I have undertaken the study of a California community college's relatively unique method of delivering contract education services to private businesses and other workforce interest within its community.

CHAPTER 2: RELATED LITERATURE

Expanding the role of contract education programs presents community colleges with a variety of practical and philosophical issues that can impact their traditionally comprehensive missions. These issues stem partly from the entrepreneurial characteristics of contract education, and partly from the convergence of other external and internal factors. The literature review that follows is divided into three sections that are designed to provide a deeper understanding of these issues, including: (a) the expanding role that community colleges are being asked to play in the economic development needs of their communities, and the increasing emphasis on collaborative activity with private business as a possible solution to meeting that economic development agenda; (b) the characteristics of contract education, including its potential impact on the comprehensive community college mission; and (c) the chronic and deepening level of underfunding experienced by California's community colleges. The last of these sections focuses on the site for this study, but carries a message for community colleges in other states as well. Collectively, the three sections provide a theoretical context or background for the major issues addressed in this study.

The first of these sections, "Collaborating With Business and Industry – The Economic Imperative," looks at the expanding role that collaborations between community colleges and their communities appear destined to play in the development of the national economy. Next, the economic development theme

continues in "Economic Development, the Community College, and Contract Education," which concentrates on various aspects of contract or fee based education, and includes perspectives that are both national and specific to California. Finally comes "California Dreaming – The Nightmare of Community College Funding." This division provides some critical insights into the funding issues facing virtually every community college in California.

Collaborating With Business and Industry – The Economic Imperative

The role of the community college in the economic development of the country is a longstanding one (Bragg, 2001, p. 2), but it appears to be increasing in importance with every passing year. Community colleges are "emerging as the prototypical learning institutions for the new economy" (Carnevale & Desrochers, 1997, p. 31). They are viewed as "allies in the war for talent" being waged by American business and industry (Swindle, 1999, p.16), as "the number 1 provider of education and training" (Bramucci, R., 1999, p. 41) related to the Workforce Investment Act, and as "the obvious solution for business and community concerns about getting and keeping skilled workers" (Zeiss, 2000, p. 48).

Prototypical Institutions

In *Developing the World's Best Workforce* (Zeiss, 1998), American-based employers and the deans and directors of continuing education at over a hundred American community colleges were surveyed for their views on two basic

questions: (a) What are the workforce education, training, and retraining needs of businesses and organizations in America, and (b) how can American community colleges best meet those needs? These questions and their answers were used to accomplish the four basic purposes of the study:

1. "...(E)xplore the extent and nature of workforce education, training, and retraining needs of the current and future workforce" (Zeiss, 1998, p. 37).

2. "...(D)etermine the value of community colleges for federal and state policy makers and the public in providing workforce education and training" (Zeiss, p. 37).

3. "...(I)dentify factors that contribute to the success of workforce education and training as well as factors that were seen as barriers working against success" (Zeiss, p. 38).

4. "...(P)resent the national results and discuss the implications for community colleges of being the nation's pre-eminent workforce and training delivery system in state and national legislative bodies" (Zeiss, p. 38).

Data for the study (Zeiss, 1998) was collected from the deans or directors of continuing education programs at 104 community colleges in 27 states, and from 2,473 employers who were established clients of community college workforce education and training services in the1994-1995 academic year. The deans and directors at the 104 participating colleges were asked to write a pair of single-page summaries, one aimed at describing their college's most outstanding workforce education and training program, and the other focused on analyzing factors that

tend to promote and/or impede the success of its workforce education and training program. The qualitative nature of the responses from the deans/directors resulted in what Zeiss (1998) calls a "framework for analysis." The framework for analysis consists of two sets of factors generalized from an analysis of the frequency in which specific concepts are advanced in the written responses. One of these sets contains nine groupings of factors that are identified as being "Factors of Success." The second set contains five groups of negative factors and is called "Factors of Challenge."

The employers were asked to fill out a three-page survey that focused on the characteristics and challenges of contract services centers. These employers varied in size from the very small (1 to 10 employees) to the relatively large (500 or more), and represented a wide variety of workplace activities including industrial and manufacturing (35.3 percent), health services (13.9 percent), and government and/or public (17.4 percent).

From the results of the surveys provided by the employers, and the analysis of the framework created by the responses from the deans/directors, the study (Zeiss, 1998) arrives at four general conclusions:

1. America's community colleges, as a system, are responding appropriately to the workforce training and education needs of American businesses and other organizations. The types and sizes of employers participating in the survey shows that the community colleges are focused on serving the needs

of small- and mid-sized organizations, the "...acknowledged engines of economic growth in the United States" (Zeiss, 1998, p. 85).

2. American community colleges are providing "high quality, flexible workforce training programs" (Zeiss, 1998, p. 88) to American corporate and non-profit organizations. Fully 96 percent of the employer respondents rated the training provided by community colleges as good or excellent.

3. There is clear evidence that the need for education, training, and retraining programs is increasing. The employers and deans/directors are virtually unanimous in the view that the main driver in this rapidly expanding need is the rate of technological change. However, a significant portion of the respondents from both segments of the study voiced the view that "the community college is behind or rapidly falling behind in this area and that this deficit is directly related to funding"(Zeiss, 1998, p. 91).

Zeiss' 1998 study maintains that the community college is in a unique position to meet the increasing workforce needs of the nation, so long as it receives the needed support, and so long as it makes the needed organizational changes. Of particular relevance to this study are the changes the report suggests the community college must make. First, the community college must come to grips with the problematic relationship that exists between a workforce development orientation and the more traditional, credit-side of the college. The negative role played by bureaucratic structure, practices, and processes was also singled out by fully 50 percent of the deans/directors. Changes suggested include a move away from

"funding biased toward credit course, instruction frozen in traditional paradigms, and unclear and cumbersome business practices in such areas as registration and billing" (Zeiss, 1998, p.93). These factors have the potential to negatively impact the employer's time-to-market ratios, and also tend to drive up the cost of delivery of instruction.

"Needed support" (Zeiss, 1998, p. 94) for the community colleges includes more support from the college's president, senior leadership team, and the trustees, as well as the entire community. Partnerships – particularly partnerships with business and industry – are lauded as a critical and effective vehicle for increasing both the support base and the effectiveness of overall marketing activities.

Most of all, the study suggests, community colleges need to address their "characteristically blurred image" (Zeiss, 1998, p. 92) by doing a better job of communicating a clear image of what their mission is, and how workforce development figures within the overall scheme of that mission. According to the study, one way to accomplish this on the workforce side is to establish a single point of contact for employers (i.e., contract services centers).

The study makes a total of thirty recommendations (Zeiss, 1998, pp. 99-102) – eight for employers, seventeen for community colleges, and five for government. Employers are urged to recognize that employees are their first and perhaps most important customers, that developing their employees is a permanent cost of doing business, and that they should develop incentives and environments that foster the employees' development of high performance skills. Employers are

further urged to demand high performance from all suppliers, outsource training needs where feasible and appropriate, and to establish strategic partnerships with community colleges in the process. Finally they are urged to assist community colleges with legislative policy development and funding support.

Recommendations for community colleges focus, for the most part, on the colleges becoming more proactive relative to influencing laws and policies that affect workforce development. They should also consider the idea of positioning workforce development as a core mission. Collaborations with both corporate and public sector organizations designed to create long-term partnerships for workforce development are recommended. The delivery of quality programs and the utilization of existing and future technologies are recommended (e.g. online delivery systems), as are the adoption of techniques focused on the comprehensive assessment of workforce education needs, and the comprehensive assessment of instructional and institutional effectiveness.

For government, the study's recommendations are aimed primarily at purse strings, and include the recognition of community colleges as the preferred providers of workforce training, the development of meaningful incentives for employers to invest more heavily in workforce development, and the deregulation of community college fiscal processes to encourage the delivery of customized, flexible instruction based upon employer needs. Finally, the government should help position the community college as the centerpiece of any post secondary

workforce development legislation and, in the process, should significantly increase the funding of community college worker education and training.

Developing The World's Best Workforce (Zeiss, 1998) provides important insights into the opportunities and challenges facing community colleges if they are to succeed in the role of becoming the lynchpin of American economic development that the study suggests that they should be. It also develops a large number of recommendations that can be used by the upper management levels of the public and private institutions that must come together in order to make it possible for America's community colleges to fully complete the task of transforming themselves into "...a superb National Training Network" (Zeiss, 1998, p. 1). But, conspicuously missing from these recommendations is any consideration of what might happen to the other functions within the traditionally comprehensive community college mission if workforce development were to become positioned as its core mission.

A Grand Alliance

The concept of economic development being the core community college mission is further advanced in *The Role of Community Colleges in the Emerging Domestic and Global Economy* (Folsom, 1999), which centers on the role that community college-to-business partnerships played in the implementation of the School to Work Act (STWA). The paper provides a thumbnail sketch of the historical role that the community college has played in America's economic

development, and singles out the impact that the 1947 Truman Commission had in establishing the community college network as a major force in the evolution of a large American middle class. The forces that led to a shift from an economy based on agriculture and manufacturing to one "characterized by the demand for high performance work along with skilled and autonomous workers" (Folsom, 1999, p. 13) are outlined, and some statistics are provided that support the notion that an education beyond the high school level – but not necessarily up to the baccalaureate level – will be needed to compete for roughly 75 percent of entry level positions in the first several decades of this century.

The community college is characterized as being especially positioned to be able to provide access to increased wages – and a place in the middle class of society – by providing training in a variety of "hot programs" (Folsom, 1999, p. 14) including nursing, computer related technologies, and electronics technology. Folsom identifies the central role that community colleges played in the implementation of the School to Work Act of 1994 as an indicator of the prime position they potentially have in advancing economic development on other fronts. The ability of the community college to deliver tech prep programs that feature both academic and technical programs leads to "a technical worker who knows how to learn within the workplace and can adjust to the inevitable changing skill demands in the future" (Folsom, 1999, p.14).

Corporate partnerships are viewed as being a crucial component in the community college's overall effort to play a central role in both the domestic and

global economy. Two basic reasons are advanced in support of this view. First, the expense of implementing and maintaining advanced technical programs, and the general inability of government funding to keep pace with this fiscal challenge, make it imperative for community colleges to look for material resources within the corporate sector. Second, industries facing the growing problem of locating and developing a quality workforce are inclined to take a more active role in supporting community colleges, both economically and politically. Folsom (1999) believes this creates a win-win situation, and cites several examples of such mutually beneficial relationships, including Long Beach City College's community building work with Caterpillar; Kirkwood Community College's $10 million training facility deal with ARGON USA; and an advanced training center developed jointly by Stark Technical College and Diebold, Inc.

Folsom (1999) concludes his paper by discussing the potential role that community colleges can play in the global economy. Citing leading authorities on organizational change and economics (e.g., Reich, Drucker, and Rifkin) Folsom (p.16) develops an overview of the major factors that make the community college "the prototypical institution to respond to this educational challenge" (Folsom, p. 17). "Community colleges," he asserts, "possess extensive roots in the local communities in which they reside. Therefore they are ideally positioned to promote the connection of education to the development of the civic and service sector of the global economy" (Folsom, p.17).

Workforce Economics

A straightforward argument for the importance of partnerships between community colleges and private businesses is delivered in *The Future of Worker Training: Business/Community College Partnerships* (2001), a report by the National Alliance of Business (NAB). The NAB report contends that the number and importance of community college / business partnerships are growing at a significant rate. For example, the report estimates that "more than 90 percent of all community colleges are engaged in some sort of relationships with local businesses" (NAB, p. 5), and goes on to point out that this is a 50 percent increase from 1990. Since 1994, U.S. companies have increased their annual outsourced training budgets from $9.9 billion to $19.3 billion, an increase of over 50 percent. Similarly, community college revenues from private grants, gifts, and contracts increased by 24.5 percent between 1991-1992 and 1996-1997.

The report attributes the increased growth in community college / business partnerships to the increased emphasis the community colleges are placing on developing "very results-oriented programs and partnerships that provide local businesses with workers trained in skills that those businesses need most" (NAB, 2001, p.3). The report goes on to point out that many of these programs are designed to meet the lifelong learning needs of workers who are already in the workforce, and notes that approximately five million students (48 percent of the community college population) are enrolled in noncredit courses. According to

NAB, these figures indicate that community colleges are an excellent resource for businesses to quickly train and upgrade the skills of workers.

NAB (2001) sees the relationship between community colleges and business as being symbiotic. "The rewards for both parties are evident: Businesses enjoy lower training costs, a long-term pipeline of trained workers, and a responsive resource for continually upgrading workers' skills, while the community colleges realize increased revenue, an expanded curriculum, and an opportunity to evolve beyond the open enrollment mission of the past..." (NAB, p. 6). The continued evolution of the community college as a major resource for business makes it well situated to become "the key educational entity for business in the future" (NAB, 2001, p. 6).

The War for Talent

Some businesses take the concept of partnering with community colleges more seriously than others, as evidenced in *Allies in the War for Talent* (Swindle, 1999). According to Swindle, the war for talent is "a strategic long-term campaign on all fronts to measurably improve student achievement on all levels" (p. 16). Community and technical colleges are identified as important "allies" of business, especially those engaged in the development and manufacturing of technology. The community colleges are lauded for their demonstrated ability to respond quickly to the training needs of industry with curriculum that can be both generalized to an industry or specific to a particular company.

Swindle (1999), who was senior vice president of Texas Instruments (TI) at the time this article was written, provides many examples of significant collaborations that TI has developed with local Texas community colleges. These include a $2 million dollar scholarship program called Rising Star that is designed to provide two-year scholarships to the Dallas County Community College District; the TI Technical Internship program which features the early identification of outstanding Associate of Science (AS) degree students who are then given paid full time work-based learning experiences while they complete the remainder of their degree programs at the local area community colleges; and the TI Technician Scholarship Program aimed at attracting high performing students into strategic Associate degree programs offered at a number of Texas community colleges.

Winning the war for talent in Texas is being accomplished through the development of "a constructive, collaborative partnership between the Texas technology industry and community colleges" (Swindle, p.19). It works, continues Swindle, by being the answer to the questions, "How should industry work with community colleges, and how should community colleges work with industry" (Swindle, p. 19)?

Love not War

Offering an interesting contrast to the metaphor advanced by Swindle is *Fulfilling the Promise of Access and Opportunity: Collaborative Community Colleges for the 21st Century* (Rendon, 2000), a paper that clearly advances a social

justice perspective in which community colleges are seen as being based on the ideal of democracy. Accordingly, "...the most important function in fulfilling their role as democratic 'peoples colleges' (Bogue, 1950) is that of providing access" (Rendon, 2000, p. 1) to students who are members of traditionally disadvantaged or oppressed groups.

By focusing on issues of inclusion and access, Rendon (2000) advances what might be called a traditional and comprehensive view of the community college mission, which is to say that she sees the *student* – particularly the disadvantaged student – as the core mission of the community college. Therefore, when she describes the collaborative nature of the community college, she moves toward a wide perspective on organizational relationships. Education, not training, is at the heart of Rendon's position:

> A vision for positioning two-year institutions as collaborative community colleges begins with a simple yet powerful objective: to provide all students with the opportunity to avail themselves of high-quality post-secondary education that will enable them to attain their educational goals. Reaching this goal requires attention to internal and external relationships (organizational culture) and to external relationships with key constituencies that seek similar goals. (Rendon, 2000, p. 4)

Operating from this position requires the ability to collaborate internally as well as externally, and also requires that the organization's guiding principles are multicultural and democratic. "Community colleges that adhere to a monocultural orientation," says Rendon (2000, p. 5), "are operating in direct opposition to the rich multiculturalism that superimposes...a wide range of perspectives that are

representative of culturally diverse peoples". Supporting the multicultural and democratic orientation of the community college also requires that teaching and learning take place in "validating...environments that are relationship-centered, connecting faculty and students" (Rendon, 2000, p. 6) in ways that foster the development of trust between the students, the teachers, and the community college.

Rendon's (2000) perspective in this area is less idealistic than it might initially appear, because she believes that transforming the traditional view of the educational process to one that is focused on creating validating multicultural learning environments will result in increased retention rates for community colleges. When she addresses the issue of preparing students for the workforce, she acknowledges the fact that community colleges are becoming "inescapably vocational" (Rendon, 2000, p. 9). Rendon – like Zeiss, Foster, Swindle and many others – sees the community college as being perfectly poised to meet the increased skills training demand, and she also focuses on collaborative relationships between the community college and business and industry as a key component in the effective delivery of technical and/or vocational programs. However, the student clearly continues to stand at the center of her perspective, and her aim remains directed toward the overarching goal of educating, rather than training that student.

> Through effective school-to-work systems, community colleges serve as a primary link between secondary and post secondary education, provide transition programs such as tech prep and cooperative and career education, and collaborate with employer, the

> community, government, and labor organizations. (Rendon, 2000, p. 10)

Collaboration and Change

A balanced and detailed view of both traditional and emerging types of collaborations between community colleges and private and/or public organizations is provided in *Looking Outward: Changing Organizations Through Collaboration* (Augustine and Rosevear, 1998). The article begins with a description of two fictitious community colleges and their reactions to environmental pressures brought on by demands from local industries for higher skilled workers, accompanied by a steady migration of Hispanic residents into their respective communities. One college, dubbed "Static" by the authors (Augustine & Rosevear, 1998, p. 419), reacts to these environmental changes by making small and relatively unimportant adjustments in its approach to its organization and its processes. Reluctant to loosen its autocratic hold over curriculum, instruction, and scheduling, and unwilling to invest precious resources by integrating more technology into its curriculum and internal operations, "Static" relies on its previously strong presence in the market to secure future enrollments into its Tech Prep program. And, while it currently offers a couple of courses in Spanish, the only effort "Static" makes to reach out to its growing Hispanic community is to organize a Heritage Day on campus (Augustine & Rosevear, 1998, p. 420).

While "Static" is hunkering down, "Transformation Community College" (Augustine & Rosevear, 1998, p. 419) has recognized the fact that the rapidly changing situation calls for immediate and decisive action, if it is to grow, or even keep its market share in the community. As hard pressed for resources as any other community college, the leadership of "Transformation" decides that the downside of collaboration with its industry partners – *the reduction in its direct control over quality standards, hardware selection, and other technical issues* – is a fair trade for an enhanced ability to respond to the workforce needs of its community. It further decides to work collaboratively with leaders from the Hispanic community to develop innovative curriculum that better responds to the multicultural needs of the community (Augustine and Rosevear, 1998, p. 420).

The authors (Augustine and Rosevear, 1998) use this brief allegorical tale to illustrate the fundamental differences between unstructured and structured collaborations, pointing out in the process that while community colleges have collaborated with external constituencies since their inception, the dominant form of collaboration has been of the unstructured variety. Regardless of whether collaborative activity is internal or external, it is defined by the authors as being unstructured if it demonstrates most or all of the following characteristics: Faculty retain control of the teaching and learning process; schedules are developed in accordance with the community college's pre-established scheduling criteria; off-site courses are taught exclusively by full-time faculty or part-time faculty who are closely supervised by a chair-person or a dean; and community college

administrators determine that the direction of the program or activity is consistent with the institution's mission (Augustine & Rosevear, p. 423).

Unstructured collaborations have been, and are likely to remain, an invaluable aspect of community college activity, say Augustine and Rosevear (1998). But, while unstructured collaborations will probably always have some utility for community colleges, Augustine and Rosevear contend that the evolving complexities of higher education will lead to an increasing reliance on structured collaborations:

> As competition intensifies and market rules change, community colleges will seek to work in networks made up of partners committed to a common product or outcome. Faculty, staff, and administrators will be forced to relinquish much of the traditional control they have held over collaborative activities. This loosening of control will affect the environment in which faculty, staff, administrators, and learners interact. (Augustine & Rosevear, 1998, p. 423)

Augustine and Rosevear (1998, pp. 424-428) see a variety of environmental conditions as the primary drivers behind the increased importance of structured collaborations. External conditions can lead to collaborative activities that help a community college create a competitive advantage in the marketplace, share risks across a wider base, and share resources in order to expand market options. A community college can also be driven to collaborate in order to increase its internal efficiencies, or to enhance the prestige of its reputation. However, while community colleges have traditionally used collaborative activities as a tactic for reducing the impact of changes in the environment, or to offset the impact of

internal limitations, the increasing complexity of both external and internal environmental factors will require community colleges to become more strategic in their thinking. This will require collaborations that are more decentralized, more loosely structured, and composed of multiple participants from both the public and private sectors of the community.

> As changes in the external environment reshape the resources available to institutions (such as finances, technological infrastructure, and services to meet student needs), community colleges will respond by implementing strategies that will increase their stability and legitimacy in the marketplace. (Augustine & Rosevear, 1998, p. 421)

Augustine and Rosevar (1998) caution that moving from an unstructured to a more complex and structured approach towards collaborations with private and public elements of the community presents major challenges for the leadership, management, and faculty of the community college. First and foremost, the leadership will have to clearly and explicitly define the core competencies of the community college, which is to say that it must articulate, as clearly as possible, the mission of the college. The leadership will also need to "establish trust in their collaborators; empower their staff to work towards the goals and benefits of the collaboration; and become adept at managing meaning in the organization" (Augustine & Rosevear, 1998, p. 430). In regard to this last point, the authors stress that leaders must be able to help the entire college community "understand why the network makes sense and, more important, how it fits into the larger set of

core competencies and core values held by the college" (Augustine & Rosevear, 1998, p. 430).

Managers also have their work cut out for them. The authors identify four major areas in which strong managerial skill sets must be brought into play: Interpersonal skills must be adequate to the task of developing strong relationships based on trust between the collaborators; the core competencies and values of the institution must be diligently protected; the value of the collaboration to the community college must be maximized; and the collaboration must be evaluated in a manner that insures that learning is enhanced:

> Network managers...must learn from collaboration and be able to apply their learning to initiatives....Not only will managers need to be skilled at evaluating, but they will also need to be able to evaluate the collaboration jointly, with partners, or agree on an external evaluator whose judgment all collaboration partners can trust. (Augustine & Rosevear, 1998, p. 431)

For faculty, the challenges will be threefold. First, competency-based curriculum will almost certainly become essential; second, some traditional full-time faculty positions are likely to be replaced; and third, the control that faculty have traditionally exercised over courses, curriculum, and even their time will decline. Augustine and Rosevear (1998) are fully aware of the tremendous implications the move towards structured collaborations presents, but do not dwell on it in their paper. Instead, they simply acknowledge that, "traditional faculty may lament the loss of control over their classroom activities" (Augustine & Rosevear, p.432). They are writing an article, not a book, and may be forgiven for a rapid

pass over this very important and controversial topic. Still, addressing this particular set of implications is crucial before the development of fully structured collaborations can be realistically undertaken by most of today's community colleges, dominated as they tend to be by a traditionally grounded faculty.

Economic Development, the Community College, and Contract Education

No other educationally based relationship between the community college and the private sector is more fundamentally focused on core values associated with economic development than contract education. This section of the literature review concentrates on developing an overview of the basic aspects of contract or fee-based education, and includes perspectives that are both national and specific to California, the site for this study.

Imprint of a Divided World

Contract education has traditionally been considered an aspect of the Community Education component of the comprehensive community college mission (Cohen & Brawer, 1989, p. 256; Lorenzo, 1994, p. 117), but it is also a major and growing component of the vocational/occupational function as well. *Community Colleges and Contract Training: Content, Origins, and Impact* (Dougherty & Bakia, 2000) provides an analysis of national data related to the prevalence of contract education, and a further analysis of the forms it takes in five different industries: auto manufacturing, construction, apparel making, banking

services, and auto repair. Dougherty and Bakia (2000) develop a definition of contract training that has seven key features, the most important being that it is "based on a contract between a community college and an outside organization" (Dougherty & Bakia, p. 199). Other defining features include the following:

- The contractor is conceived of as the main client for the training. Students are secondary clients.
- Community colleges receive payments from the contractor and/or public agencies providing third party payments.
- The contractor largely, if not entirely, determines who will receive the contracted training.
- The contractor has a significant or even determinative voice in framing the content of the training.
- The contractor has a significant or even determinative voice in establishing measures of success.
- The contracted programs are usually – but not always – customized to the contractor's requirements in some fashion. (Dougherty & Bakia, p. 199)

While contract training is extensive – over 90 percent of all community colleges were engaged in some level of contract training in 1994 – Dougherty and Bakia (2000) suggest that the depth of the programs is uneven. Still, their data indicate that "contract education students constituted around 18 percent of the *total* (credit and non-credit) headcount enrollments…in the fall of 1993" (Dougherty & Bakia, p. 210).

In examining the origins of contract training, Dougherty and Bakia (2000) focused on training contracted by business, which comprised 72 percent of all contract education in 1991. They identified two primary reasons why the corporate interest in contract education services from community colleges has grown, and continues to grow at a significant rate. The first of these is the increased skill

demands placed on their existing workforce, which is being driven by the increased technological complexity of the workplace. The problem of ever-increasing skill demands is not limited to a single sector of American industry, although it is most severely felt in manufacturing.

The second reason is even more basic: There is a scarcity of well-trained, veteran workers in this country. Several factors are contributing to the shortage, including the retirement of older workers, a diminishing interest on the part of many students in traditional manual trades, and the drying up of longstanding sources – as exemplified by the fact that car dealers are feeling shortages of trained workers from previously reliable sources like garages and gas stations.

Community colleges and their contract education programs are attractive to businesses because they are perceived to be cheaper than in-house programs, and also cheaper than other outside training resources. They are also perceived to be more responsive and flexible than four-year colleges, and more reliable than vocational schools (Dougherty and Bakia, 2000, pp. 212-213). The ascendancy of contract education is as much related to the need for community colleges to develop external resources as it is to the demands from businesses for increasing levels of low cost, flexible, and reliable workforce development programs. Community colleges have "made a determined effort – both individually and through their state and national associations – to present themselves to business and to government policy makers as key, if not superior, providers of contract training" (Dougherty & Bakia, 2000, p. 216).

These efforts have been reinforced by considerable encouragement, and not a little financial aid from state and federal governments, who see contract education programs as a valuable resource in an overall effort to sustain the economic development of the nation. Typically, state aid has been in the form of direct subsidies, which has made it possible for community college contract education programs to keep their pricing structures highly attractive to both corporate and public organizations. The federal role has been less direct, but equally meaningful. Programs like the Job Training Partnership Act of 1982 (JTPA), and its replacement legislation, the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), have had the effect of making federal training programs a significant funding resource for community college contract education programs.

Others reasons community colleges tend to be focusing more on contract education include: (a) enhancing the community service role of the college; (b) increasing student enrollments in more regular course work; (c) broadening the community college's political support base; (d) increasing the level of program quality, particularly the quality of vocational curriculum; and (e) improving the effectiveness of student placement efforts. The influence of national and state community college associations is also identified as being pivotal:

> These associations have addressed their exhortations about the benefits of having community colleges do contract training as much to community college faculty and staff as to business people and government. Beyond exhortation, the AACC and other national and state associations have provided community colleges with practical advice…technical assistance…conferences…(and) a computerized

> database of program descriptions that is accessible through the Internet. (Dougherty and Bakia, 2000, p. 224)

Contract training impacts community colleges in ways that are both "wide-ranging and subtle" (Dougherty & Bakia, p. 225). For example, by being profit oriented, contract education programs can boost revenues. This is a double-edged sword, however, because they can also be as vulnerable to financial ups-and-downs as any other business oriented endeavor. Employer demand may disappear or state aid may be cut, and the community college may be faced with the hard choice of running its contract education program at a deficit, or shutting it down entirely.

But even when contract education programs don't have a direct and positive impact on the community college's bottom line, they may still be considered beneficial because of the visibility and political support they can develop for the college within the community:

> Greater visibility means that the community college is protected against attacks that it is failing to do its job and is therefore not worthy of additional state or local aid. In addition, by "partnering" with influential employers, community colleges can call on them to lobby government officials for more money, greater programmatic authority, or regulatory leeway. (Dougherty and Bakia, 2000, p. 228)

While many in the community college believe that contract education meets the general interests of, and is a service to, the community, this orientation is not unproblematic. "It is a value shaped by the fact of business's ideological hegemony within this society...there is little or no consideration of the possibility that on occasion the interest of the community and of employers might actually be

opposed" (Dougherty and Bakia, 2000, p. 221). Greater support from the business sector carries with it greater business involvement in the internal affairs of the community college, which in turn may lead to the need to redefine the community college mission. Two mechanisms for change are discussed, the first of which is attitude/cultural change. Involvement in contract training reshapes the attitude of community college faculty and administrators, who then carry these attitudes into traditional areas of curriculum. This tends to produce an institutional culture that shows "impatience with the notion of education for other than job preparation" (Dougherty & Bakia, 2000, p. 233).

Increased emphasis on contract education may impact the mission in other ways as well. Of particular importance to Dougherty and Bakia (2000) in this regard is the degree to which such an emphasis will impact the ability of the key leadership to focus on the more traditional aspects of the community college mission. Administrators' time and attention are finite, they point out. The transfer function, because of the level of attention and resources it requires to maintain and advance it, is the most likely casualty of the increasing focus of administrators on increased involvement with economic development programs like contract education, but all other functions of the traditional community college mission are at risk as well:

> Traditionally, the primary purposes of American education have been as much about cultivating citizenship as serving economic efficiency....We note the shards of evidence that contract training – while it clearly does bring community colleges more revenues, students, and political clout – may also weaken their commitment to

> traditional values of education and the transfer function. These contradictory effects of contract training argue that we should proceed cautiously with it. It is not a panacea. It bears the imprint of a divided world. (Dougherty & Bakia, 2000, p. 236)

Business Model

Community colleges that provide contract education services to their communities typically do so through the establishment of business and industry service centers. These centers sometimes exist only at the conceptual level, and are merely functions of a larger division – continuing education, for example. As is the case with the IBP, however, a business and industry service center can sometimes develop as a totally separate sub-division within the college that may even be housed in dedicated and off-campus facilities. A set of models designed to lead to business and industry service centers that can operate at high efficiencies are detailed in *Organizing for High Performance in the Delivery of Business and Industry Services* (Barber, Klein-Collins & Pacelli, 1998). This report emphasizes the identification and explication of best practices, which makes it a useful handbook for designing and operating business and industry service centers, a secondary objective of the project.

A central finding of the study (Barber et al, 1998) is the importance of the relationship between a business and industry service center and its affiliated two-year campus. The researchers elected to look at this crucial relationship from the vantage points of three separate performance models, the first of which is

developed from the point of view of the "Center" itself (Barber et al, 1998, p. 7). Two sets of performance outcomes are established, one designated as "Service Delivery" outcomes (Barber et al, pp. 19-20), and another designated as "Center Management and Operations" outcomes (Barber et al, pp. 21-22). On the Service Delivery side, "successful" business and industry service centers are able to demonstrate six important performance outcomes. First, they are able to develop and maintain a full range of high-impact services to customers, which is to say that they are able to offer "both training and non-training services in formats that are responsive to employer needs" (Barber et al, p. 19) especially performance improvement needs. Second, business and industry centers are able to approach the sales and marketing process systematically, and are able to "identify strategies and relationships that increase the center's visibility and positive image" (Barber et al, p. 19) across the business community. Third, successful business and industry service centers are effective in diagnosing customer needs, and in using systematic processes to "determine appropriate training and non-training solutions" (Barber et al, p. 20). A fourth performance outcome is the promotion of a customer orientation, one that "promotes, coordinates, and evaluates" (Barber et al, p. 20) the center's level of external and internal customer service. Fifth, the center demonstrates that it is able to "accurately measure the impact of programs and services" (Barber et al, p. 21) by regularly assessing the effectiveness of center offerings. Sixth, and finally, the successful business and industry service center has the demonstrated ability to "develop strong partnerships and alliances" (Barber et

al, p. 21) through the proactive development and maintenance of meaningful and active community and employer partnerships.

Six more performance outcomes are associated with the successful center's management and operations function. These include its ability to optimize financial planning, efficiently manage human resources, effectively plan strategies and operations, maintain and improve operational processes, proactively manage change through strong leadership, and establish and maintain a productive relationship with the two-year campus. This last performance outcome is perhaps the most important and difficult one to accomplish.

> Business and industry service centers are unique enterprises that are often bridging the gap between the business and academic communities. These two worlds have differing value systems, differing timelines, and differing paces of operation....Straddling these two worlds, and attempting to work with both, is the business and industry service center. (Barber et al, 1998, p. 11)

The center's "operating environment" (Barber et al, p. 25) constitutes the second performance perspective developed by the report. Six environmental factors are identified as sources of competitive advantage or disadvantage for business and industry service centers. These include the physical setting where services are delivered to customers; the variety of interpersonal relations experienced by both customers and staff; procedures related to doing business with the two-year campus; informational and technological resources; what and how the customer pays for the services; and the actual "deliverables" for which the customer pays. For the most part, says the report, these factors are ultimately

shaped and controlled by the policies and procedures of the affiliated two-year college involved.

> The high performing business and industry service center operates like any business, using defined processes such as human resources, marketing, fiscal management, and service delivery that are designed to meet the needs of its customers. These processes determine not only the quality of the services delivered but also how the customer feels about the experience of receiving these services. All of these processes involve other departments of the two-year campus in their execution...(Barber et al, 1998, p. 25)

These policies, and the stance of the two-year campus, can either support or inhibit the processes of the center and hence its competitive success. Examples of supportive policies would include enhanced marketing efforts, streamlined customer service, increased levels of operational funding, and increased budget flexibility. Inhibiting policies are those that lead to more time-consuming red tape, slower response times to customers, inappropriate utilization of human resources, customer dissatisfaction, and frustration and turn over for the center's staff.

An analysis of nine policy areas typically encountered at community colleges and identified as being potentially harmful to the ability of business and industry service centers to attract, serve, and retain customers is provided in the report: (a) cumbersome and/or underfunded hiring policies; (b) low or inflexible pay scales; (c) seniority and related issues when faculty serve as trainers; (d) inadequate support of sales and marketing efforts; (e) FTE requirements locked into the regular campus schedules; (f) surplus funds returned to the campus' general fund instead of reinvested by the contract services center; (g) excessive red tape

around signing of contracts; and (h) slow procurement policies that limit the speed of the center's response to market needs (Barber et al, 1998, pp.27-33).

A model for a "supportive" college environment is also included, and with it a list of eight "key" supportive components:

- An actively supportive president who is both an "internal champion," and an "external marketing agent"
- Campus faculty and staff who are integrated into center activities.
- A center director with increased "strategic authority"
- An adequate administrative infrastructure at the center.
- Hiring policies that can be specific to the center's needs and operations.
- A "designated administrator" at the two-year campus who manages the processes that link the community college to its business and industry service center, and who can "ensure that fiscal processes that serve the corporate community have performance standards, are tracked and are continuously improved".
- A joint marketing effort that coordinates the efforts of the two-year campus and the center.
- Budgetary policies that are "specific to the center," including policies that result in the center's discretionary control over its budget, and "ownership of a predetermined portion of the center's surpluses." (Barber et al, 1998, pp. 35-38)

The report's third and final performance perspective focuses on the role of the Center Director, and consists of a detailed "Core Competency Model" (Barber et al, 1998, pp. 41-43) for the position that contains twelve competencies clustered within three broad areas of competence seen to relate to the director's role: Leadership, Analytical, and Operational competencies. Interestingly, only one of the twelve general competencies (i.e. Commercial Orientation) relates directly to the fact that the director's position is specific to the context of business and

industry service center performance. The rest of the competencies are very general and are those one would expect of someone in a director's position in essentially any kind of enterprise (e.g., "Problem solving/Analysis...Breaks problem into component parts and differentiates key elements..." Barber et al, p. 43).

Organizing for High Performance is limited to the 54 business and industry service centers that comprise the EnterpriseOhio Network, so generalizing conclusions developed from this report to other states and their contract education programs is not entirely possible. Still, it seems safe to say that the report supports the notion (Baker, 1994; Cohen & Brawer, 1989; Dougherty & Bakia, 2000) that the contract education activities of business and industry service centers are frequently hampered by the lack of a solid business orientation, and a general lack of success in developing close coordination with the other programs and personnel in the community college.

Effective Practice

This division of the literature review concludes with *An Identification of Effective Practices in Contract Education Programs in Selected California Community Colleges* (Smith, 1983), a study that looked at 98 California community colleges, roughly 91.5 percent of all community colleges in the state at the time of the research. Smith was looking at the then relatively new contract education function of California community colleges, and was specifically interested in achieving five closely connected objectives. To begin with, Smith (p. 2) wanted to

identify California community colleges that were actually *engaged* in formal contract education activities which illustrates the fact that in 1983, not all of the state's 107 community colleges had elected to do so. Next, Smith wanted to identify which of the community colleges were deemed by their peers to be successful in their contract education endeavors. He also wanted to find out which of those colleges so identified would consent to in-depth interviews to be held at their various campuses. Having identified successful colleges and willing participants, Smith hoped to complete his study by describing practices that the participants in his study identified as leading to successful contract education endeavors, and then make recommendations that future practitioners might use in their efforts to develop and operate their own operations (Smith, p. 3).

Seven of the state's community college districts located in major urban areas were selected for Smith's study (1983), with four of them being situated in Southern California, and the other three being located in the Silicon Valley. San Jose / Evergreen Community College District, the site of my own research, was included in this latter group. In order to gain both a quantitative and qualitative grasp of a given community college's internal operations and external challenges, Smith developed a set of questions that were divided into ten major divisions:

1. *Employers*, which included questions about the kinds and sizes of companies involved, as well as questions focused on the details of the more common practices involved in the day-to-day operations of the contracts;

2. *Students*, similarly focused on both the statistical and operational aspects of the contract program;
3. *Courses*, which included questions ranging from types of courses to how the content was developed for the various programs;
4. *Evaluation*, a section which was very short on asking after quantitative data, but very long on asking after the more qualitative side of things;
5. *Support Services*, covering library services, course scheduling procedures, and counseling services;
6. *Registration*, which was the single shortest section in the questionnaire, and which focused mostly on best practices related to where and how students were likely to register for their contract education programs;
7. *Union Participation*, a section designed to define the nature of the role that unions play in both the delivery and utilization of contract education programs;
8. *Instructional Staff*, the longest section in the questionnaire, and one designed to develop a solid overview of the various and major issues associated with the actual delivery of the instruction;
9. *Supervision*, which looked almost entirely at issues related to practice, rather than those related to program characteristics;
10. *Fee Structure / Contract*, where it was particularly noted that little standardization exists in either amounts charged, or methods related to determining those amounts.

Crafted using the help of "an advisory committee of community college administrators who are familiar with the subject matter" (Smith, 1983, p. 7), Smith's surveys provided him with information about program characteristics, and best practices. Smith was able to draw thirteen generalized conclusions from the results of his surveys, and advances 21 recommendations at the conclusion of his study. All of these resonate nicely with the current literature on the subject of contract education, a major accomplishment because the study is somewhat dated, and marred by some serious issues related to its methodology. Still, in spite of its methodological shortcomings, Smith's 1983 study provides many useful insights into the challenges that faced the contract education operations at California community colleges then, and continue to be living issues today (A. Wood, personal communication, 18 July, 2001). In presenting recommendations for further study, Smith sees clearly beyond his own research horizon and directly into the state-of-the-issue today:

> The present study has examined contract education in its infancy in California community colleges. It appears, from the present perspective, that contract education will spread, grow, and become both an important source of revenue for California community colleges and an important new way in which they can serve their communities. More study is needed to give direction to those who are working in contract education. More information is needed on contract education students, contract education instructors, and *the political, social, and financial implications inherent in the contract education process* (italics mine). (Smith, 1983, p. 194)

California is home to some of the oldest and largest community colleges in America (Knoell, 1997, p.121), and at one point they were among the most highly respected and emulated in the country. However, since the passage of Proposition 13 in 1978, California's community colleges have been operating "under near crisis conditions" (Breneman & Nelson, 1981, p. 113; Knoell, 1997, p. 133). The references in this section of the literature review provide a picture of how the effects of chronic underfunding and a fluctuating economy are slowly but surely grinding down what was once one of the greatest and most promising educational endeavors in this century (Dougherty & Bakia, 2000, p. 222).

Magnificent Assumption

In 1960, California implemented a Master Plan for Education (Knoell, 1997, p. 125-128), which included two major provisions: first, it was intended to make postsecondary education readily available and affordable for every California citizen; second, it was designed to achieve this lofty goal by creating a seamless tripartite among the community college, the state college, and the university systems in the state. For its proponents, the California Master Plan immediately became a "social contract" between the state and its citizens. In the process the essential character of the "plan" changed in a most profound manner: instead of being simply the guiding rationale for effective long-term strategic planning, the fundamental *objectives* of the plan became a set of *entitlements*. Terrible things happen when such changes of character occur, a fact amply illustrated by the

contents of a report titled *Breaking the Social Contract: The Fiscal Crisis in California Higher Education* (Benjamin & Carroll, 1998).

Developed from research conducted by the Rand Corporation, subcontracted through the Regents of the University of California, and commissioned by California Education Roundtable, the report paints an alarming portrait of the potential future of higher education in California:

> For the first time since the early 1990s, public colleges and universities are enjoying some real budget increases, and the prognosis for 1998 and 1999 is quite good. Given these gains, it may seem odd to predict imminent fiscal crisis for higher education in California – indeed for the nation – yet that is exactly what our research suggests…Unless significant steps are taken to address the situation, hundreds of thousands of Californians will be denied access to higher education within the next 20 years. (Benjamin & Carroll, 1998, p. 1)

The problem, says the report, has its origins in the confluence of at least three major factors, the first and foremost of which is growth in demand. According to the report, if current population growth trends continue, it is possible that the state's higher education system must be prepared to handle approximately two million full-time equivalent students. This figure represents a staggering 60 percent increase from 1997 figures developed by the California Postsecondary Education Commission, and is driven by projections that show not only a huge increase in state population, but also indicate a significant increase in the proportion of the overall population seeking postsecondary education (Benjamin & Carroll, 1998, p. 11).

Operating costs are also increasing at a rate that continues to outstrip both the nationally computed Higher Education Price Index (HEPI) and the state and national Consumer Price Index (CPI). While acknowledging the difficulties involved in accurately measuring and comparing the actual costs-per-student in all of higher education (Bowen, 1994, p. 115-124), Benjamin and Carroll suggest that cost containment has been, and remains, a major challenge for all of higher education in California.

> If anything, it appears that costs in California's public (education) systems as measured by unrestricted expenditures, may be growing even faster than costs nationally, as measured by the HEPI. A sector whose costs grow faster than inflation for an extended period ultimately reaches the limits of available resources, as has been demonstrated in the health-care industry. (Benjamin & Carroll, 1998, p. 13)

While demand and costs have been rapidly rising, public funding for higher education has essentially been decreasing (Benjamin & Carroll, 1998, p. 13). The report goes on to examine a variety of statistical features of this perplexing problem. For example, General Fund appropriations for higher education in California remained relatively flat between 1970 and 1995, and projections indicate that, in spite of occasional positive and negative fluctuations, this flatness will continue well into the foreseeable future. But when growth in demand and cost of delivery are taken into account, this means that California has been underfunding higher education since the mid-1970s. During approximately that same time frame, taxes have been increasing at a steady rate, but the share of that income allocated by the legislature to higher education has been steadily decreasing.

Why are the statistics for demand, costs, and taxes all pointing in a markedly upward position, while statistics related to expenditures for higher education pointed in an equally marked but downward direction? The report cites two primary causal factors. First, "...mandatory expenditures on health and welfare programs, K-12 education, and corrections are consuming a rapidly increasing share of the general fund. The plight of higher education in state budget battles is exacerbated by the rapid increases in corrections, mainly prisons" (Benjamin & Carroll, 1998, p. 14). Second, the state's support for higher education is stagnating due to "...the public's growing reluctance to authorize general fund revenues to be used for services directly delivered to individuals" (Benjamin & Carroll, p. 15), which has resulted in the need for students to bear a larger share of the cost of higher education.

Added to all this is a continuing shift in federal spending priorities towards entitlement programs – Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid – that focus primarily on a steadily increasing older segment of society. Some estimates show that by 2005 these entitlement programs may consume as much as 75 percent of all federal revenues, which may have an especially profound and negative impact on the University of California's budget, 20 percent of which currently comes from federal coffers.

In an attempt to offset the impact of steadily decreasing levels of government funding, the higher education system in California has resorted to increases in tuition. Tuition has "soared" says the report, and by 1997 had climbed

to "...four times higher than it had been two decades earlier" (Benjamin & Carroll, 1998, p. 16). According to the report, if tuition is allowed to increase at its present rate, there could be dire consequences for the affected student population:

> ...higher education could become so expensive that between 30 and 45 percent of the students (600,000 to 900,000 FTE students) will be denied access. If average real tuition, adjusted for inflation, quadruples again in the next 20-year period (1996 to 2015), large numbers of students will be priced out of the system. (Benjamin & Carroll, 1998, p. 17)

The report serves out a "Bottom Line" (Benjamin & Carroll, 1998, p. 18) for the complex funding issues involved in California higher education that is built around two scenarios, one based on optimistic assumptions, the other based on more pessimistic ones. The outlook, as it is presented, is pretty bleak from either perspective. On the "optimistic" side – and assuming present patterns of spending are maintained by the higher education institutions – if California continues to increase tuition rates, and government appropriations for higher education continue at the level established in 1997, then the funding shortfall will *only* be around 4.2 billion dollars in the year 2015. But, *if* tuition is locked at its current levels and government funding remains as flat as it has for the last 25 years, then the shortfall could be as large as 6.6 billion dollars.

"Breaking the Social Contract" (Benjamin & Carroll, 1998) securely fastens the future development – or even the future survival – of the current higher education system in California directly to the interests of business and industry:

> If these (higher education) institutions are to fulfill their role in positioning California for its next phase of economic and social

> development, higher education leaders must work with business and industry leaders to bring about the needed institutional redesign. (Benjamin & Carroll, p. 5)

The call for increased levels of direct business involvement in the reshaping of higher education in California is repeated in the report's forward to it's final recommendations, in which it evokes the idea that business and industry will need to take on a primary role in moving the state legislature and the governor in the direction of making the painful reallocations of general revenues necessary to insure access to higher education in California.

> They (the government) are likely to come to this point only if persuaded by the private sector leaders who, after all, are the primary consumers of the graduates and research produced by higher education. And private sector leaders will make the case for increased state resources for higher education only if they are convinced that California's colleges and universities are truly undergoing the restructuring that leads to increased productivity. (Benjamin & Carroll, 1998, p. 20)

Budgeting and Behaviors

A less alarmist but equally sobering view of the funding issues faced by the California community college system is provided in *The Impact of Changes on Funding on California Community Colleges' Expenditure Patterns 1990-91 Through 1994-95* (Kimberling, 1998). During the period covered by Kimberling's study, California's community college system endured "the most severe fiscal crisis in its history" (Kimberling, p. 5). The community colleges had been dealing with the problem of chronic under-funding for almost two decades, as described in the Rand report (above). Then, in 1990, the state was hit with what the governor ultimately described as being "the worst economic and fiscal situation since the great depression" (Kimberling, p. 38).

The confluence of chronic underfunding and a sharp downturn in the state's economy had a series of profound impacts on the community colleges. For example, in 1991-1992, as part of the legislature's attempt to reduce the state's $14.3 billion budget deficit, state support of education was cut by $835 million. This resulted in an estimated $225 to $270 million loss for the community colleges, which responded in a number of significant ways, including the following: (a) decreasing spending in operating expenses and delaying equipment purchases; (b) reducing summer courses by up to 50 percent; (c) not adding course sections as classes filled; (d) capping enrollments; (e) delaying construction projects; (f) reducing library hours; (g) closing off-campus centers and other facilities; (h) firing

part-time staff; (i) eliminating student newspapers; (j) increasing class sizes; (k) reducing clerical positions; (l) reducing travel budgets; (m) implementing four-day work weeks; (n) borrowing money; and (o) turning away students. (Kimberling, 1998, p. 60)

Funding for higher education continued to shrink between 1991-1992 and 1994-1995, and the community colleges continued to follow budget retrenchment strategies adopted in 1991-1992. While adjustments in the areas identified above were instrumental in attempts to meet the situation created by the ongoing shortfalls, the bulk of the savings were made by cutting faculty positions, and by reducing salaries and benefits, which tended to further disrupt an already fragile system. By the time the recession was declared "over" in 1995, the state's community college system had experienced some very significant cuts in virtually all areas of operation. For example, by the fall of 1993, over 9000 courses had been cut from the levels supported just three years earlier; overall college enrollments had dropped from a high of 1,515,300 in 1991 to a low of 1,357,300 (a decline of 10.4 percent) in 1994; and the number of part time faculty had been trimmed by as much as 12 percent. Executive personnel were cut by approximately 9.4 percent, and full time faculty dropped by 3.8 percent. (Kimberling, 1998)

With this history in mind, Kimberling asks a fundamental question: Given the fact that public budgets "visibly disclose policy priorities by virtue of their accompanying resource commitments…(and)…budget participants actively use the

budget as a vehicle to advance their priorities" (Kimberling, 1998. p. 6), then how did California's community colleges adjust their expenditure patterns?

Kimberling's study looks at the state's financial data using a "descriptive research" (Kimberling, 1998, p. 114) methodology, and employs two complimentary approaches to institutional financial analysis to develop an overall perspective: (a) ratio of costs by major functional categories of activities and objects (line-item) classifications of specific expenditures (b) cost-per-unit analysis, which compares "...total or specific operating costs to a specific workload measure or measures" (Kimberling, p. 116). The analysis focused on six areas of inquiry:

1. Within which functional and line-item areas of general operations did the California community colleges adjust their expenditures...?
2. What were the actual dollar and percentage values of expenditure adjustments within the functional and line item categories for the 71 community college districts?
3. Were those operational adjustments system-wide significant in relationship to the system's 1990-1991 spending patterns?
4. Did multi-college districts' expenditure adjustments differ significantly...from (a) the system as a whole; (b) the single college districts; or (c) their own 1990-1991 spending patterns?
5. Did single college districts' expenditure adjustments differ significantly...from: (a) the system as a whole; or (b) their own 1990-1991 spending patterns?
6. How did the system's response in operating expenditure adjustments relate to contemporary budget theory and previously studied practices? (Kimberling, 1998, p. 117)

Kimberling's analysis is complex and lengthy. However, in the end he provides a well-delineated description of turbulence – even hyper-turbulence – in the operational environments of California community colleges:

> The environmental context could be characterized by unpredictable changes within the economic and political arenas, which contributed to a high degree of uncertainty within the community college system. The uncertainties of funding led to immediate reductions in discretionary line items and one-time expenditures. The subsequent decline in enrollments resulting from increasing fees and class reductions, exacerbated by the chronic nature of the recession, produced longer-term instability and heightened the context of the community colleges' responses. (Kimberling, 1998, p. 271)

While the recession officially came to a close in late 1995, the long-term funding outlook for California's community college is still worrisome, a perspective that Kimberling's 1998 study shares with the Rand Report discussed above. The chronic underfunding that existed prior to the recession, the recession itself, a forecasted increase of approximately a half million (1.7 to 2.2 million) new students in the next decade, and the near certainty that state funding resources will not be able to keep pace with the growing needs of the system all combine to make the long-term future of community college funding in California a very murky one. Citing a variety of other studies, Kimberling advances three basic coping strategies for the community colleges: "(1) Explore new methods of service delivery and the use of emerging educational technologies; (2) Begin accomplishing more with less; (3) Reduce administrative functions and return the highest priority to educational missions" (Kimberling, 1998, p.277).

Kimberling (1998) then makes 24 recommendations, ten that are designed to improve the efficiencies of existing and traditional operational approaches, seven that might positively increase revenue options, and five more aimed at improving overall performance. Only one of these recommendations focuses directly on an

increased reliance on public-to-private collaborations, and it is very limited in its perspective: "Increase the number of public-private partnerships in ways which provide financial contributions from the private sector for educational training programs which (their employees) could directly benefit from them as well as other students" (Kimberling, p. 281).

Summary of the Literature Review

This review of literature was aimed at the development of a deeper, theoretical understanding of factors that may influence the manner in which the SJECCD deals with philosophical and practical issues related to its continued efforts to grow the IBP, its contract education program. In the first section of the Literature Review – "Collaborating With Business and Industry – The Economic Imperative" – the emphasis was on literature related to the increasing role that collaborations with private businesses are likely to play in the community college's efforts to serve the economic development needs of its community, the country, and even the world community. Some of the literature in this section (e.g., NAB, 2001; Swindle, 1999; Zeiss, 1999) advances a view in which the relationship between the community college is seen as a partnership developed in order to advance the role of the community college as "...a superb National Training Network..." (Stewart, 1991, as quoted by Zeiss, 1998, p. 1). This perspective is very narrowly focused on the economic development interests of the community,

and that narrowness is perceived to pose a potential threat to the more broad and comprehensive mission of the community college (Bailey & Averianova, 1998)

But another perspective exists (Augustine & Rosevear, 1998; Rendon, 2000), one that sees collaboration with private business as the means to an end more focused on "access and opportunity" (Rendon, p. 2). Rendon sees the community's needs and interests through a multicultural lens, and the community college's role within the community expands, in her vision, to include the interests of the general citizenry – particularly the poor and disadvantaged citizenry – as well as the interests of private business (Rendon, p. 5). Augustine and Rosevear (1998) also advance a more holistic approach to collaboration with private business and point out the importance for community colleges to form collaborations that are more decentralized, more loosely structured, and composed of multiple participants from within the community (Augustine & Rosevear, p. 432).

The two perspectives presented in this section of the Literature Review are not mutually exclusive, and the strong economic development orientation advanced by Zeiss and the others may be understood as being merely a subset of the more holistic or comprehensive one supported by Rendon. Still, while there may be no need to reconcile these two perspectives, it is possible that there may be a need to balance them, particularly if the traditionally comprehensive mission of the community college is to be preserved.

Corporate Metaphor

The second section of the literature review focused on developing a deeper understanding of contract education and its relationship to the other functional areas of the community college. Contract education has been identified as being part of the community service function of the community college (Cohen & Brawer, 1989), which reflects the fact that its not-for-credit, fee-based structure makes it capable of serving multiple functions within the overall mission of the community college. But other writers (e.g., Bailey & Averianova, 1998) describe it as being one of the community college's "...Economic Development Activities..." (Bailey & Averianova, p. 13). Dougherty and Bakia (2000) tend to see contract labor in a similar light, and provide an overview of the dimensions, characteristics, impact, and potential future of contract education. These researchers (Dougherty & Bakia, 2000, pp. 222-225) explain that contract education programs can provide community colleges with a number of important benefits, including more revenues, more students, more placement for those students, more political support, better programs, and increased opportunity to serve the diverse needs of their communities.

Dougherty and Bakia also point out (2000, pp. 230-231) that contract education programs have the potential to negatively impact other functional areas within their community colleges. This potential stems partly from the contract education's corporate style of operation, which makes it highly responsive to employers – leading to fears on the part of the more traditionally oriented members of the community college that contract education might give Private Interest too

much control over the Public Trust. Additionally, contract education programs frequently fail to recover the overall cost of their operations, which means that funds must be diverted from the institution's operational budget to support the programs' activities – most of which are undertaken in support of the Private Interests within their communities.

Finally, Dougherty and Bakia (2000, pp. 234-235) maintain that contract education programs may have a negative impact on their community colleges by decreasing the amount of attention that top level administrators pay to those functions of the community college that are not directly related (as contract education typically is) to the institutions' activities as a partner to the economic development interests within the community. This concept is advanced by other scholars (e.g., Cohen & Brawer, 1989) and appears to suggest that community college administrators commonly might not be up to the task of handling the full range of tasks associated with managing a truly comprehensive set of programs and services.

This section of the literature review also presents information related to what successful contract education programs should look like in general (Barber et al, 1998), and concludes with a review of effective practices among community colleges in California (Smith, 1983). The piece by Barber et al provides a detailed checklist that can be used to assess the effectiveness of a contract education program and its administration, and proved invaluable to the conduct of the field portion of my own study (see chapter 4). While being somewhat dated, Smith's

1983 study of early contract education efforts at California's community was able to anticipate the need for more information related to the "...political, social, and financial implications inherent in the contract education process" (Smith, p. 194).

Wake-up Call

The third and final section of the Literature Review focuses on the funding issues faced by California's community colleges. They are very serious, indeed, a fact born out by a report from the Rand Corporation (Benjamin & Carroll, 1998). The report maps out the dimensions of a fiscal crisis for California's higher education sector and shows how growth for demand and growth in costs of operations are converging with declines in both state and federal funding to create a very bleak outlook for California's higher education system. The report suggests that community colleges, which already receive a scant three percent of the state's general fund expenditures (Benjamin & Carroll, p. 15), are likely to see their share of the fund hold steady through the year 2005.

Against this flat-lined funding moves a significant trend for increased demand for access, a demand that might see as much as a 60 percent increase in the next fifteen years (Benjamin & Carroll, 1998, p. 11). The report concludes with six recommendations, one aimed at the reallocation of funds, four focused on restructuring, and one that calls for the "redefinition of the appropriate level of education for all California *workers* (italics mine) in the 21st century" (Benjamin & Carroll, p. 28). In regard to this last recommendation, the report also calls for the

reaffirmation of the Master Plan For Education adopted by the state in 1960 – a plan that gave the community colleges, "responsibility for providing initial access (to education) for the majority of California's college-going youth" (Knoell, 1997, p. 122).

Finally, a study by Kimberling (1998) looks at the seriousness of the fiscal problems faced by California community colleges between 1990 and 1995. Echoing the sentiments of the Rand report (Benjamin & Carroll, 1998), Kimberling makes it clear that these problems are unlikely to abate in the foreseeable future. Focusing on how California's community colleges reacted to what was, to that point in time, California's worst ever recession, Kimberling asks an important and fundamental question: Given the fact that public budgets "...visibly disclose policy priorities by virtue of their accompanying resource commitments...(and) budget participants actively use the budget to advance their priorities" (Kimberling, 1998, p. 6), then how did California's community colleges adjust their expenditure patterns? At the end of his detailed and convincing study, he gives a somewhat startling answer:

> The (community college) system has been in trouble...Yet as troubling as the (1990-1995) conditions were, there is nothing in the research...which indicates an end to "business as usual." Rather, the community colleges appear to have responded by retrenchment and reallocation processes that are reasonably predictable. Thus, during the recession the organizational size may have been reduced, but the organizational context did not materially change. (Kimberling, p. 272)

Writing from a 1970's perspective on finance issues faced by California's community colleges beginning in the late 60's, Lombardi (1992, pp. 29-33) provides an insight into budget strategies used by the California community colleges that are similar to those made by both Kimberling (1998) and Benjamin and Carroll (1998) relative to the strategies used by many of those same institutions in the late 1990's:

> New directions in finance are predicated on the belief that there is a way out of the financial distress now affecting community colleges. But the new directions point inward as well as outward. It is, of course, easier to seek relief from taxpayers or students than from increased productivity, better management, and less imposing edifices. But the taxpayers have become reluctant, and increasing fees and tuition may be counterproductive. Moreover, excessive dependence on augmented funds to relieve each crisis may become a ritual of self-absolution which inhibits us from seeking other, perhaps more basic, cures for our troubles. (Lombardi, 1992, p. 37)

SJECCD as Context

Since early in their history, America's community colleges have played an important role in the economic development of the country and the workforce development of its citizens (Bragg, 2001). Today, the pressure is mounting on these highly flexible organizations to take on an even larger responsibility for these two roles. This pressure is being driven from two directions, the first being the interests of the private sector and its ever-increasing need for a highly skilled and adaptable workforce, and the second being the increasing need of the public for access to affordable and effective educational pathways to a meaningful share of

the American Dream. Nowhere are these pressures more pronounced, and nowhere are the fiscal impediments to meeting their challenge more daunting, than in California. California's community college system, the largest in the world, is beset with a complex variety of internal and external challenges that are unlikely to be resolved without immediate, decisive, and radically creative changes in both the systematic and cultural paradigms that have dominated their operations since at least the early 60's.

By virtue of the fact that contract education can: (a) develop new funding resources, and (b) provide rapid and effective training to constituencies typically underserved by traditional educational activities (Dougherty & Bakia, 2000), contract education could conceivably play a crucial role in the community colleges' efforts to meet what are likely to be increasingly demanding economic and workforce development mandates from both the state and federal governments. But contract education is not without its controversies and its issues, a fact that emerges more clearly in the concluding chapters of this study of the San Jose / Evergreen Community College District and the Institute for Business Performance.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

This qualitative case study looks at the major practical and philosophical issues faced by the Evergreen Valley / San Jose Community College District (SJECCD) as it continues to grow the role of its contract education program, the Institute for Business Performance (IBP). The concepts of Public Trust and Private Interest are of significant importance to this study, which strives to understand the complex relationship created when an instrument of the Public Trust, such as the community college, collaborates with organizations operating out of Private Interest. My interest in this subject stems from a concern about the *degree* to which community colleges should be involved in the direct support of the workforce development needs of private business. The origins of that concern were touched upon earlier in this study, but because they have implications that might impact both the design and execution of this study, they could bear some further elaboration.

Personal Perspective

I have mixed emotions about the community college. On one hand, I am an enthusiastic proponent of its role in providing access and opportunity to education and other services for constituencies that might otherwise be prevented from living the American Dream (Rendon, 2000). At the same time, I am sympathetic to some of its critics (e. g., Brint & Karabel, 1994; Dougherty, 1994; Levin, 2000; Pincus, 1994) who question the quality of its endeavor, the efficiency of its operations, and

– most of all – the degree to which it should operate (through the economic development function of its broad based mission) in the direct support of the Private Interest. My emotions are equally mixed with regard to the role that private enterprise plays in advancing the interests of our society, finding its myopia for profits as repellant as I find wonderful its ability to achieve incredible things. And while I fully appreciate the fact that collaborative activities between private business and higher education already play a major role in support of the development and maintenance of our economy, I am troubled by the degree to which the community college is being called upon by both external and internal constituencies (e.g., NAB 2001; Zeiss, 1998) to increase the dimensions and scope of that support. Therefore, a major motivation behind this study has been my desire to find a point of reconciliation among these generally conflicting viewpoints.

Outside In

It should be noted here that I am not a community college insider. The vast majority of my experiences as an educator have taken place within the for-profit sector of higher education, and my earliest roles within that experience cast me in the role of competitor with the community college. The for-profit college I worked for – first as a faculty member and then as an administrator – operated in direct head-to-head competition with many of the vocational programs offered by several of the fairly large community colleges that operated within the same region. Today

my perspective on the community college remains inherently that of an outsider, even though my current position as the Dean of a private and regionally accredited four-year college makes my stance towards the community college much more that of an ally, rather than that of a competitor. Accordingly, prior to the execution of this study, my insights into the existential fabric of the community college were extremely limited.

The Emic View

This study is aimed at being a "phenomenological reflection and explication" (Van Manen, 1990, p.78) of a relationship involving two distinctly different organizational paradigms, one (private business) that I am extremely familiar with, and the other (the community college) of which I have little in the way of direct or lived experience to go on. The phenomenological method was selected for this study because it is useful in helping one gain the kind of *"emic,* or insider's perspective" (Merriam, 1998, p. 6) needed in order to more fully understand how a true insider might perceive issues within his or her own "world of experience" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p. 24). The utility of phenomenology stems from the way in which it deals with the presuppositions that are inherent in the "natural standpoint" (Husserl, 1967, pp. 73-74) of the "biographically situated researcher" (Denzin & Lincoln, p. 23) – presuppositions that, left untended, act in ways that separate us from a deeper understanding of the world of our inquiry. This is to say that a phenomenological approach to research – particularly with

regard to understanding the fieldwork involved in a qualitative study – involves the use of a mental device "which permits us to discover the spontaneous surge of the lifeworld" (Van Manen, p. 185). Van Manen goes on to describe four levels of phenomenological reduction:

> First, reduction involves the awakening of a profound sense of wonder and amazement at the mysteriousness of the belief of being....Next one needs to overcome one's subjective or private feelings, preferences, inclinations, or expectations that would prevent one from coming to terms with a phenomenon....Third...one needs to strip away the theories or scientific conceptions or thematizations which overlay the phenomenon...and which prevents one from seeing (it) in a non-abstracting manner...Fourth, in the *eidetic* (italics mine) reduction one needs to see past or through the particularity of the lived experience toward the universal, essence or *eidos* that lies on the other side of the concreteness of lived meaning....The reduction is the ambition to make reflection emulate the unreflective life of consciousness. (Van Manen, p. 185)

[Bracketed]

Up to this point in the chapter, I've attempted to point out, well in advance of discussing the design aspects of this study, several of the major personal assumptions and philosophical perspectives that will tend to shape not only that design, but its implementation, findings, and interpretations as well. These disclosures have been presented as part of the reduction process outlined above. That process is also known as "bracketing" (Van Manen, 1990, p. 175), and is explained by Husserl (1964), the father of the phenomenological method:

> *We do not abandon the thesis we have adopted* (e.g. our personal viewpoint or bias), *we make no change in our conviction,* which remains in itself what it is....And yet the thesis undergoes a modification – whilst remaining in itself what it is, *we set it, as it were, out of action, we disconnect it, bracket it.* (Husserl p. 76)

Why is bracketing necessary to the pursuit of this phenomenologically oriented qualitative study? It is my aim to gain a deeper understanding of the relationship between two dissimilar organizational cultures, one I am long familiar and intimate with, and another with which I stand as an outsider. Bracketing provides me with a way to suspend my habit of judgment long enough to develop empathy with the participants in my study (most of whom come from that second culture) and, in the process helps me be less of an outsider. It also allows me to stand back from the established order of things and more fully encounter the unknown. Therefore, I bracket as part of the process of striking off from the existential limits of my natural standpoint towards a deeper, richer understanding of the lives and perspectives of the participants in my study. Put as simply and directly as I know how, bracketing lets me change my metaphysical shoes so that I might walk a more authentic mile in the shoes worn by individuals whose entire professional lives have been influenced by their intimate relationships with the community college.

Design Considerations

Fixing one's research position against the backdrop of the broad field of qualitative study is a very complex problem, because the field itself is extremely

dynamic. Illustrative of all this is the response that one of my professors gave when pressed by students to reveal his own research epistemology: "What's my research epistemology? You mean today" (Suzuki, 1999)? Still, I've been able to locate the research perspective for this study somewhere within what Denzin and Lincoln (1998, p. 22) call "The Fifth Moment" in the historical evolution of qualitative research – a "moment" characterized by approaches to research that are highly personalized, intimate, and focused on short stories rather than grand narratives. I've located myself in this "moment" partly because it feels so natural, and partly because the concrete resources of my life (e.g., time, money, opportunity and such) made other, larger projects – grander narratives, if you will – impractical. The naturalness of the feeling comes from the manner in which certain characteristics of qualitative research (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998, pp. 42; Denizen & Lincoln, 1998, pp. 23-31; Gall, Gall, & Borg, 1999, pp. 289-304; Merriam, 1998, pp. 5-9) resonate with my practical, philosophical, and spiritual orientations. For example, Bogdan and Biklen point out the importance of perspective in qualitative research, and recognize that "researchers in education (are) continually asking questions…to discover what their (subjects) are experiencing, how they interpret their experiences, and how they themselves structure (or create) the social world in which they live" (Bogdan & Biklen, p. 7). Denzin and Lincoln note that qualitative research is "endlessly creative and interpretive" (Denizen & Lincoln, 1998, p. 29), and then go on to stress that, "The interpretive practice of making sense of one's finding is both artful and political" (Denizen & Lincoln, p. 30). Gall et al pick up

the interpretivist issue and explain that, " Interpretivists believe that all researchers, research participants, and readers of a case study report will have their own unique interpretation of the meaning and value of that report" (Gall et al, p. 303). And finally, Merriam (1998) talks about the holistic nature of qualitative research:

> Qualitative research implies a direct concern with experience as it is lived or felt or undergone. In contrast to quantitative research, which takes apart a phenomenon to examine component parts…qualitative research can reveal how all the parts work together to form a whole. It is assumed that meaning is embedded in people's experiences and that this meaning is mediated through the investigators own perceptions. (Merriam, p. 6)

These and other characteristics of qualitative research fit comfortably within the framework of my experiences as an artist, an educator, and a thinker, and, in the process help describe my "personal biography"(Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p. 23):

> Behind (the qualitative research process) stands the personal biography of the gendered researcher, who speaks from a particular class, racial, cultural, and ethnic community perspective….Every researcher speaks from within a distinct interpretive community, which configures, in its special way, the multicultural, gendered components of the research act. (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p. 23)

Process Overview

This study is organized along very basic "observational case study" lines (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998, pp. 55-56): Its focus is on a specific organization (the SJECCD), and the data were gathered through observations and interviews conducted at the various sites that make up the environmental context for the District's operations – particularly those operations associated with its contract

education program, the IBP. For the most part, participation in the study was limited to a relatively small and specific group within the District's total organizational structure (i.e., individuals occupying upper-level administrative positions with duties that bring them into direct and meaningful contact with the IBP on a regular or frequent basis). Finally, the primary goal of the field portion of the study was aimed at understanding how individuals involved in the day-to-day conduct of their duties approach their tasks, handle their challenges, manage their relationships, express their values, and otherwise make meaning from their joint enterprise. Most of all, I was curious to see if my concerns about the degree to which community colleges are being asked to expand their focus on supporting the economic development activities of private business were echoed by people who actually engage in such collaborative activities.

In its earliest iterations, my intent was to look at collaboration from a three-point perspective developed from the individual viewpoints of: (a) the community college's top leadership, (b) the leadership at the community college program level, and (c) the corporate leadership involved. By looking at collaboration from the vantage points of three distinct organizational situations and/or cultures, I hoped to more or less "triangulate" – the objections of Bogdan and Biklen (1998, p. 104) notwithstanding – the phenomenon itself, and gain a more generalized understanding of what the values and risks were perceived to be by the active participants themselves. As I will explain shortly, however, the realities of the

fieldwork soon made it clear that involving the corporate leadership to any significant extent would not be possible.

Providence and Process

In the process of selecting a site for this study, I had the good fortune to meet the Chancellor of the Evergreen Valley / San Jose Community College District (SJECCD) when she was speaking to a group of graduate students from Oregon State University, and learned about her contract education program, the Institute for Business Performance. I also learned that collaboration with both the public and private sector figured significantly in the Chancellor's vision of how the SJECCD should address most of the functions in its broad-based mission (G. Evans, personal communication, 4 April, 1999). After considering other site possibilities, I determined that the SJECCD would make an excellent site for my research, and made arrangements with the Chancellor to proceed.

Fieldwork began in June of 2001, when I made my first weeklong visit to the San Jose area. On that trip I was able to visit the District's offices, both community college campuses, the IBP, a One-Stop Workforce Development Center, and the training offices for one of SJECCD's most important collaborators, the Intel Corporation. I was also able to conduct interviews with a wide variety of individuals who play important roles in the conduct of SJECCD's various collaborative activities. Included in this group was the Chancellor, her Executive Assistant, one of the two Vice Chancellors, the president of Evergreen Valley Community College (EVC), two deans (one from each campus) involved in occupational education programs, the director of the IBP, two of her sales

personnel, and the director of Workforce Silicon Valley (a local non-profit group that supports school to work initiatives and programs). I was also able to tape record all but one of these interviews (the officer from Intel requested no tapes and no direct quotes) and these were converted into transcripts upon my return to Portland.

After reviewing my notes and transcriptions from this first visit, two things became clear to me. First, the IBP and its contract education operations were conducted in a considerably different manner than the other occupational education activities engaged in by the District's two community colleges. While it was possible that the significantly different structure of not-for-credit education (Dougherty & Bakia, 2000) might account for many of the operational differences, it could not account for what I perceived to be a significant cultural difference between personnel at the IBP and the community college campuses I had been able to meet. This difference began to intrigue me.

Second, it was clear to me that the idea of developing a three-point perspective towards collaboration that had business, the community colleges, and the District at the corners would make my study a far larger enterprise than I could ever hope to complete, given the resources at my command and the time-lines at my disposal. Furthermore, both my ongoing review of the literature and my few preliminary dialogues with personnel from the business community suggested that the philosophical tensions that might exist for those individuals representing the community college's side of the collaboration were not as relevant or important to

individuals connected with the Private Interest. Accordingly, I decided to "funnel" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998, p. 7) my efforts into a smaller volume by focusing primarily on the interrelationships within the community college and its various organizational components. I still had a three-point perspective, but now it had the District, the two campuses, and the IBP at its corners.

Two more trips to San Jose followed, one in July and one in October 2001. On the July trip I revisited the IBP and Evergreen Valley Community College and conducted follow-up interviews with the IBP's director and the college's president. I also conducted a second interview with the Dean of Applied Science at San Jose City (SJC) and an initial interview with her president. These interviews were designed to provide me with more background on the historical and political aspects of the IBP and its relationship to the campuses. Perceptions of the community college's mission were also a major focus of these interviews. Follow-up interviews aimed at developing a deeper insight into how the IBP fit into the District's overall planning were also conducted with the Chancellor, Vice Chancellor, and the Chancellor's Executive assistant. Finally, I visited for a second time with the director of Workforce Silicon Valley and reinforced my growing conviction that concentrating on the issues confronting the private sector side of collaborations with public institutions was a potentially very valuable enterprise, but totally beyond the practical limits of my own study. The value stems from the fact that the community college figures as only a small portion of a conscious effort on the part of the Private Interest to influence, and even ultimately manage, *all* of

American education. The limiting factor develops from the fact that even a focused study of private sector interests in post secondary education would require the concentrated efforts of a coordinated team to complete in any sort of reasonable time frame. A solitary researcher such as myself could spend a lifetime coming to grips with the complex and multiple ways in which the Private Trust is moving to manage, and capitalize upon education currently conducted on behalf of the Public Trust.

The October trip included final follow-up interviews with the Chancellor, the Sales manager for the IBP, and the SJC president. I also had the opportunity to interview two more of the IBP's clients, a manager at Lockheed-Martin, and the Senior Training and Staff Development Counselor for the County of Santa Clara. Prior to completing this last trip, I revisited the two campuses, the IBP, and the SJECCD headquarters and took photographs to help me "make a memory" (K. Wesson, personal communication, 18 July, 2001). Finally, loaded with boxes of tapes, bundles of notes, dozens of photographs, and a memory groaning from the weight of a huge accumulation of impressions, I headed back to Portland.

Since the completion of the fieldwork, I have maintained contact with some of the main participants of this study, including the Chancellor, Vice Chancellor, the presidents of the two campuses, the director of the IBP, and the IBP's Corporate Account Manager. From time to time I have asked some of these participants to comment directly on sections of this study (particularly the ones in which their input played a major role in developing). Where appropriate, those

comments have been incorporated in the final draft of this document. In each situation where this practice has been followed, my goal has been to insure the accuracy of any quantitative data and the thoroughness of my observations.

Questions and Questioning

The purpose of this study is *to understand* the major practical and philosophical issues faced by a California community college district as it continues to grow the role of its contract education program. From a phenomenological perspective, this purpose is both very simple (the objective is understanding) and very complex – the latter because reaching understanding requires moving, through the agency of the "lived experience" (Van Manen, 1990, p. 44), beyond knowledge and into the realm of mc ng. Accordingly, a phenomenological approach to questions and questioning – both in the development of the research study and in the fieldwork itself – entails the opening up, and keeping open, of possibilities. "But," says Van Manen (p. 43), we can only do this (keep open to the possibilities) if we keep ourselves open in such a way that… we find ourselves deeply interested (inter-esse, to be or stand in the midst of something) in that which makes the question possible in the first place."

Throughout the planning and execution of this study I have attempted to remain "inter-esse," in the both the literal and metaphorical sense that I believe Van Manen (1990) intended. Accordingly, I began my fieldwork by asking the most general kinds of questions possible, and tried to keep them focused almost

exclusively on learning about the processes, personal histories, and formal organizational structures that make up the more fundamental textures of the SJECCD and the IBP. I worked especially hard on trying to ask questions that would allow the participants in the study to focus their attentions on how they actually go about doing the day-to-day tasks related to their functional areas. In this way, I tried to provide them with a way to participate in the phenomenological process (Van Manen, 1990, p. 44) by placing them in the position of having to reflect on the characteristics of their individual circumstances.

Once I had a feeling for how each participant perceived their work life and could place their activities within the overall context created by the SJECCD's efforts to grow the IBP, I moved on to questions focused on the functional *interrelationships* among the various individuals involved. Here my goal was to determine to what degree the various relationship issues identified by several authors (Augustine and Rosevear, 1998; Barber et al, 1998; Dougherty & Bakia, 2000) in Chapter 2 of this study might echo in the day-to-day life of the SJECCD/IBP context. It was also at this stage that I began to focus the attention of my participants on issues related to finance, hoping that this would help me determine: (a) what kind of funding issues they faced within their own particular area of responsibility, (b) if they perceived these issues as being influenced by the SJECCD's promotion of the IBP, or (c) if they perceived their particular funding issues to be closely related to the overall fiscal challenges faced by most other California's community colleges (Benjamin & Carroll, 1999).

In the latter stages of the fieldwork, and in subsequent follow-up communications with several of the participants, I began to move from the substantive to the formal (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998, pp. 159-160), and focused more narrowly on how the various participants understood the mission of the SJECCD, and the place occupied by their own respective functional areas within that broader mission. My intent at this point was to determine: (a) how closely allied the perspectives of the study's various participants might be towards the general mission of the SJECCD; (b) how well the IBP and its extreme entrepreneurial focus was perceived to fit within that particular mission; and (c) whether or not an increased emphasis on the District's role in support of an economic development agenda was seen as a potential threat to other functions within that mission.

Data – Management and Analysis

The data collected for this study can be divided into a handful of classifications (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998): (a) Field notes of both the descriptive and reflective variety; (b) tapes and transcripts from interviews in the field; (c) official documents from the District and the IBP; (d) e-mails, phone logs, and other personal correspondence with several of the participants; (e) photographs taken at the various facilities that comprise the SJECCD; and (f) a wide assortment of books and articles generally related to the focus of the study. From the outset of this study I have been determined to keep my data management process as simple and as practical as the necessities of sound research might permit. Accordingly, early on I

developed an approach to data management that is very basic, very low-tech, and very flexible.

A major portion of the more important materials collected and/or produced for the study were created electronically, and then subsequently backed-up onto storable media for safekeeping. Having so much of the material collected for this study in electronic form has made it possible to develop a simple coding process that has been used to both control and sort most of the key data (e.g., transcriptions of taped interviews, field notes, and various other documents including journal articles). The electronic coding system itself consists of a list of key words (Merriam, 1998, p. 164) that figure predominantly in the study. In some cases the key words were developed using models provided by Bogdan and Biklen (1998, pp. 171-176), but more often than not, the coding developed on an as-needed basis during the writing phase of this study. Data retrieval in this kind of system is accomplished quite simply by selecting a key word and then using the "Edit – Find" function of my word processing program to peruse its multiple occurrences. This "technique" – so low in sophistication that I am hesitant to even call it a technique – has proven to be quite effective, particularly with regard to the many transcriptions and field notes I've collected, especially after I created a single master file for each major subdivision of electronically based documents currently at my disposal.

Preoccupations

From the study's outset, two aspects of the qualitative research process have absorbed a great deal of my attention. The first of these aspects relates to what has been variously described as the "accuracy and comprehensiveness" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998, p. 36), "trustworthiness" or "authenticity" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p. 213), and "internal validity" (Merriam, 1998, p. 202) of the data. The fundamental question, says Merriam (p. 203) is, "What is being observed in qualitative research, and how does the researcher assess the 'validity' of those observations?" In the same passage, she provides an insight that I've adopted as my own position:

> Because human beings are the primary instrument of data collection and analysis in qualitative research, interpretations of reality are accessed directly through their observations and interviews. We are thus 'closer' to reality than if a data collection instrument had been interjected between us and the participants. Most agree that when reality is viewed in this manner, internal validity is a definite strength of qualitative research. (Merriam, p. 203)

Merriam (1998, pp. 204-205) identifies six strategies that can be used to enhance the internal validity of qualitative studies: (a) Triangulation, a process in which multiple investigators, multiple sources of data, and/or multiple methods are used to confirm the study's findings; (b) member checks, which involve taking data and tentative findings back to the participants who supplied the data in the first place; (c) long-term observations, which entails remaining at the site for a sustained period of time, or returning to it multiple times; (d) peer examinations in which colleagues are asked to comment on findings as they emerge; (e) collaborative modes of research, which has the participants actively involved in all aspects of the

study, from conceptualization to write-up; and (f) researcher's bias, meaning an up-front disclosure of the researcher's assumptions, worldviews, and theoretical orientation. Five out of these six strategies have been incorporated in the design of my study, with only (e), collaborative modes of research, being omitted.

The net result of these strategies is that I feel very comfortable with the quality of the of the data developed for this study, and believe that I have done at least rough justice to the efforts of the authors I've encountered in my review of the literature (a considerable feat, given their significant capabilities) and have also honored the many individual confidences shared with me during the fieldwork itself. At the same time, I am acutely aware of the fact that a different observer – or even one of the participants – might find it difficult to be in much agreement with either my insights or my observations. Such is the fate of the qualitative researcher:

> Will two researchers independently studying the same setting come up with the same findings? This question is related to the quantitative researcher's word *reliability*. Among certain research approaches, the expectation exists that there will be consistency in the results of observations made by different researchers or by the same researcher over time. Qualitative researchers do not exactly share this expectation… (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998, p. 36)

Text and Context

In addition to focusing on finding ways to insure that my study is "faithful to the context and the individuals it is supposed to represent" (Gall et al, 1999, p. 414), I have also paid considerable attention to the notion of context itself. Because qualitative research focuses on process, meaning, and understanding, "the product

of qualitative study is richly descriptive" (Merriam, 1998, p. 8). And, because the phenomenological method can be both descriptive and interpretive (Van Manen, 1990, p. 25), the phenomenologist's attention to context is pronounced:

> ...everything in this world presents itself in context and is modulated by that context. When the image of an object changes, the observer must know whether the change is due to the object itself or to the context or to both. Otherwise he understands neither the object nor its surroundings. Intertwined though the two may appear, one can attempt to tease them apart, especially by watching the same object in a different context and the same context acting on different objects. (Arnheim, 1969, p. 37)

Gall et al (1999) emphasize the role that contextual completeness plays in developing the richness, reliability, and meaning of the study itself: "In order for case study phenomena to be fully understood, they must be set within a context. The more comprehensive the researcher's contextualization of the case, the more credible are their interpretations of the phenomena" (Gall et al, p. 307). The development of a rich contextual basis for a qualitative study can also "enhance the applicability of the study to other situations (Gall et al, p. 308). Having established an initial premise (Chapter 1), a theoretical context (Chapter 2) and a research perspective (Chapter 3), the study takes a phenomenological look at a variety of other "contextual features" (Gall et al, p. 307) peculiar to the site of my research, including those related to: (a) physical setting or environment; (b) number and characteristics/activities of participants; (c) histories; (d) divisions of labor; (e) routines and variations from routines; (f) origins and consequences of significant events; and (g) basic patterns of order.

Ethical Considerations

Prior to undertaking this study, I developed a pair of documents that addressed the human subject implications of my planned research activities. Based upon instructions from the Institutional Review Board (OSU, 1999), these instructions are aimed at making it as unlikely as possible that any harm may come to individuals and/or organizations that might find themselves the subject of a graduate student's research project. These documents are necessary outcomes of the tremendous concern that "...revolves around issues of harm, consent, deception, privacy, and confidentiality of data..." (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p. 168) intrinsic to any research situation. I believe these issues and their attendant concerns to be both legitimate and well grounded. My personal and professional knowledge of the fields of documentary and editorial photography make me suspicious of the motives of those researchers inclined towards "conflict research," or those who "...demand that we deceive the establishment in order to expose it" (Denzin & Lincoln, p. 172). Therefore, I have tried to focus on positioning my inquiry further in the direction of proactive discovery than reactive exposition.

For all of my efforts to reduce the risks for those individuals and / or institutions that I wish to study, the fact remains that it is impossible to eliminate them entirely through the agency of documentation alone. Van Manen (1990, pp. 162-163) identifies four categories of risk that the researcher must remain aware of, regardless of other formal considerations: (a) The research may have certain effects

(negative and positive) on people with whom the research is concerned and who will be interested in the phenomenological work; (b) there are possible effects of the research methods on the institutions in which the research is conducted; (c) the research method may have lingering effects on the actual "subjects" of the study; (d) phenomenological projects and their methods can impact the researcher himself or herself.

With these risks well in mind, I have exercised considerable caution with regard to what I've asked, heard, and written throughout the duration of my research. In other words, I have remained, throughout, acutely aware of the fact that "...(the risks in) Qualitative case studies are limited by...the sensitivity and integrity of the investigator" (Merriam, 1998, p.42). In the metaphor of portraiture, I have attempted to execute this study in a manner that remains true to the considerable trust extended by my sitters, even as I strive to reveal their special and unique characters, and the equally special and unique character of their common enterprise. If and where my skills as a portraitist have failed me in my effort to be both perceptive and gentle, I have done everything I know how to insure that any negative impact is felt by my reputation, and not the sitter's sense of well being or security.

The "Sitters"

A total of sixteen people participated directly in this study. The names, titles, and affiliations of these participants are detailed in the table below. A letter

code that each individual was assigned in order to provide proper attribution for quotations used in the remaining chapters of the study is included in the table.

Participants in this study, their affiliations, and designated codes

Participant and title	Affiliation	Code
+ Dr. Geraldine A. Evans, Chancellor*	SJECCD	1
Dr. Louis S. Albert, Vice Chancellor*	SJECCD	2
Ken Wesson, Executive Assistant*	SJECCD	3
Dr. Chui L. Tsang, President*	San Jose City College	4
Dr. Kathy Werle, Dean/Applied Science*	San Jose City College	5
Dr. H. Clay Whitlow, President*	Evergreen Valley College	6
Linda K. Carbajal, Dean/Business & Arts	Evergreen Valley College	7
Henry Gee, Faculty	Evergreen Valley College	8
Anna Woods, Director*	IBP	9
Bill Dahl, Corporate Account Manager*	IBP	10
Lisa Brillon, Sales Coordinator	IBP	11
Rick Kuhn, Economic Development Liaison	ED>NET	12
Jerry Kissinger, Workforce Development	Intel Corp.	13
Craig Brumbaugh, Manager of Finance	Lockheed-Martin Corp.	14
Karen Levey, Senior Training Specialist	Santa Clara County	15
Jim Lawson, Executive Director*	Workforce Silicon Valley	16

*Indicates individuals interviewed on two or more separate occasions.

Between late May and early November 2001 I visited these individuals in their offices and taped the majority of the dialogues that developed. I also used virtually every moment of downtime to travel around the Silicon Valley, an area I had never visited before. And, where the SJECCD was involved, I spent additional time simply wandering around the campuses, through the buildings, and even the nearby neighborhood – all this in an attempt to get more of an intimate (Van Manen, 1990, p. 37) feeling for the environments in which these participants perform their day-to-day workplace activities.

In the process of writing up this research, I have frequently pulled out (usually at random) one of the tapes and a few of the photographs I collected in my interviews and on my walks, simply to get back in touch with the people behind the words, and the wonderful experience of learning what they do, how they do it, and what they feel from having done it (Van Manen, 1990, p. 36). From time to time, I've also gotten back in touch with several of the participants over the phone, or by e-mail, to ask them about a point-of-fact, or to shed a little more light on things they may have said in the interviews. Throughout the study, I've been continually struck by their openness and willingness to talk about their work and the organizations. The degree to which they've made their time, resources, and lives available to me has been humbling.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

Against the framework provided by the theoretical context presented in Chapter 2 stand the lived experiences of my fieldwork, my direct and highly subjective encounters with individuals associated with the San Jose / Evergreen Community College District (SJECCD) and its contract education program, the Institute for Business Performance (IBP). Central to my efforts in this area was the desire to encounter each of the study's participants in a way that would help me enter their "lifeworld" (Van Manen, 1990, p. 53), as well as the lifeworld created through the interaction of the SJECCD and the IBP with the District's campuses. Through such encounters, I hoped to be able to gain the empathy (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998, p. 98) or deeper level of understanding that is characteristic of a phenomenological study:

> First, a researcher must have an intuitive grasp of the phenomenon, and then follow up by investigating several instances or examples of the phenomenon to gain a sense of its general essence. The next steps are to apprehend relationships among several essences and then to systematically explore "the phenomenon not only in the sense of *what* appears…but also of the way in which things appear" (Spiegelberg, 1965, p. 684). Next to be determined is how the phenomena have come into consciousness; next beliefs about the phenomena are bracketed, and finally, the meaning of the phenomena can be interpreted. (Merriam, 1998, p. 16)

I've organized sketches of my experiences into three sections, each one focused on specific operational areas within the overall organizational structure of the SJECCD, and aimed at providing the existential (i.e., lived experience) context for the study: (a) the IBP, its personnel and its agenda; (b) the two community

college campuses and some of their key administrators; and (c) the District, its top leadership, and its relationship to both the IBP and the campuses.

The Institute for Business Performance – Image Is Everything

The IBP is housed in a relatively new, glass-and-metal, seven story office building located in one of the ubiquitous professional areas surrounding the San Jose airport. There is nothing in the outside environment that remotely resembles anything connected to a community college, or any other traditional American educational setting, for that matter. Near the eastern end of the building is a small food services complex that houses a Starbucks, a bakery, and a Sushi bar. The fashionably well-dressed people with their cellular phones who go in and out of these places all day long are from the other nearby office buildings. Just across the street to the north is a Doubletree hotel, where a pretty average "single" can run up to $229 a night. It is summer and the flowerbeds around the building are filled with well-maintained stands of Lilly-of-the-Nile, surrounded by deep beds of Jasmine. The heady perfume follows me into the building. The lobby is understated but elegant, and the interior of the elevator is conspicuous for its lack of graffiti and postings. As I exit into the dove-gray second-floor hallway, the large, transparent double doors of the IBP are directly to the right. The receptionist is professional, but cordially so: "Would you like a cup of coffee while you wait? Oh, the Director will see you right a way. I'll bring the coffee to you. Cream or sugar?"

The hallway leading to the Director's office features a few tasteful graphics and well-maintained plastic plants. I pass by several large rooms loaded with what looks like state-of-the-industry computer equipment, and silently note the probable significant cost-of-operations involved in keeping up this kind of environment. I half wonder if the coffee will be as good as the interior design work. It is not an overly large office complex, but I become lost for a moment and wander into the wrong office. I'm smiled at patiently, and escorted the remaining distance to the Director's office. Relaxed and comfortable in her tasteful burgundy business suit, the Director motions me into one of the well-padded chairs across from her desk. She has the beginnings of what looks like a little smile on her lips – a look that stays with her throughout most of our initial interview. "How can I help you with your study?" (9) she asks, and settles back in a large, comfortable-looking chair, to listen.

A couple of hours later, I leave the IBP offices, struck by the fact that I felt, for all the world, as if I had just stepped out of the offices of a successful small to medium sized corporation. And that, to some extent at least, is pretty much what I had done.

Roots

Established in these quarters in 1994, the Institute for Business Performance is the contract education arm of the SJECC District. Contract education at SJECC was originally conducted under the mantel of the "community education" function

of the comprehensive community college mission that guided Evergreen Valley and San Jose City, the two colleges that – along with the IBP itself – make up the District. By 1983 the District had developed a reputation among its California community college peers as being an important and successful force in business of contract education (Smith, 1983, p. 107). Then, in 1994, contract education efforts at the two campuses were merged at the District level, and the IBP was born.

The impetus behind the move to separate the IBP from the administrative control of either of the campuses was provided by at least two factors: (1) the realized and potential growth of contract education activities were significant enough to warrant the establishment of more autonomy for the program; (2) the potential revenues were significant and strategic enough to require the District's direct supervision (9).

Characteristics

Beginning with the move to its upscale quarters in 1994, the IBP has been designed to look, feel, and behave like the successful corporations it is intended to serve. There are several key characteristics of the IBP that tend to positively impact both its record of success and its image of professionalism. First, and perhaps most importantly, the IBP runs according to a well-designed and regularly referenced strategic plan. While strategic planning is something that most organizations *say* they engage in, the IBP's leadership stays on top of their plan, and uses it in much the same way as they employ their mission statement (i.e., as a

constant reference and set of guidelines for the daily work of the enterprise). Says the IBP's director, "We have a vision and mission statement, and our core values statement, and our employees are all well aware of these. It's part of our training, and we work to make it a daily part of our culture" (9).

The strategic planning component is also something that is reinforced with the District's Board of Trustees. "I think our Board...(is) proud of us, and believes that we are the most successful (contract education) program in California. They understand now that we are part of *their* mission and ...they've made us one of what they call their 'Standing Priorities.' I think that's a real compliment to us and to the job the Chancellor has done in educating the Board about our mission" (9).

Second, the IBP has specialized the roles of their personnel. For example, in other contract education models (12), one person typically handles a variety of tasks associated with the contract, including the sales, curriculum, and implementation components of the activity. They might also be involved in the actual delivery of instruction, depending on the size of the contract and the areas of expertise. In the IBP's operational approach, major functional activities are handled using individuals with separate and specialized knowledge bases. The IBP's Account Manager puts it this way:

> I think one of the significant differences in this particular model is that, because I'm not a program manager, and my focus is in developing relationships with business and bringing in new business, I'm a lot more pro-active in cold calling and trying to get new business....in the course of the year, I will make thousands of phone calls to businesses and have them become aware of us. Because I can hand off the project to someone else to handle the actual nuts

> and bolts of the contract, and am not wrapped up in the A-to-Z stuff like my colleagues at other contract education operations, I can really focus on the development of new business. That's a huge advantage for us. (10)

Third, the IBP's sales force is professional, meaning that it is structured in a manner consistent with many corporate practices. For example, the sales force is paid on a salary-plus-commission basis. This balance between secured and incentive-based pay, tends to develop a sales force that is focused on both new market opportunities and long-term client service. The sales force is multi-tiered as well as multi-tasking, meaning that the account manager's function is supported internally by a Sales Coordinator position, and externally through the use of specialized resources on a per-project basis (e.g., curriculum design work). The account manager believes this makes it possible for the IBP to develop the strong customer-service mentality that the SJECCD leadership believes is at the heart of the IBP's success.

> I've been proud of the fact that we have a very good rate of repeat business. I think the earmark of any successful small business is that you develop a client basis by building upon it. For example, the county of Santa Clara…our first contract with them a few years ago was pretty modest – just a few thousand. But, this month we're wrapping up an annual contract for about $75,000…again that is another advantage of our model: we can give our clients a lot more sustained personal attention than some of our competitor colleges. (10)

The IBP can respond to its customers' needs in a very rapid and flexible manner, particularly with regard to curriculum, scheduling, and venue – a fourth characteristic that is a relatively common attribute of community college contract

education operations in general (Lorenzo, 1994, p.119). The IBP's ability to customize the delivery of training and/or educational services plays a crucial role in its success. Curriculum can be developed from scratch, purchased from a third party vendor, or taken directly from existing curriculum already developed for programs by the District's campuses. The IBP's director focuses on how this helps build the collaboration with the customer.

> Depending on what they (the customer) thinks they need, we typically do a needs assessment, and then we go from there...We can use the customer's curriculum, build it from scratch, or we sometimes take existing curriculum off the shelf and customize it – like this one contract (Solectron) I was telling you about...we did some job-shadowing on the manufacturer's floor, picked up the kind of language they wanted, and then we customized our regular ESL curriculum from the college and took it out to them. They were just as happy as they could be...the company participated in the development...it's a very collaborative and fun way to do it, and probably played an important part in them winning the Malcolm Baldridge Award. (9)

While the bulk of the IBP's business is of the customized "not-for-credit" variety, approximately 20 percent of their work involves for-credit programs coordinated through, or turned-over-to the District's campuses. Providing for-credit programs for their private and public sector clients is a complex process, because the IBP has no degree-granting authority, and must therefore collaborate with the colleges in order to help their clients meet their needs. The IBP's account manager considers this one of the more interesting aspects of his work.

> There's a great deal of potential in bringing the Associate Degree on-site and, to some extent, actually customizing it for an organization. Our latest "adventure" along those lines is with Pacific Bell, where we actually have an Associate Degree program that is focused for

> their inside and outside techs, the people that do the splicing and connect the cables, who are ultimately responsible for making sure the phones work. It's not totally customized, but definitely much more so than if they just went to the community college on their own. We really pride our selves on finding out what their big issues are, from customer service to electronics, and try to create something that hadn't existed before around their needs. (10)

Collaborating and/or coordinating with the campuses can potentially reduce the flexibility of the IBP, but it's an acceptable trade off for the ability to develop an additional level in the relationship between the customer and the District. A good example of this is the work that the IBP accomplished with the development of the Workstation Ownership program for IBM in the late 1980's. This was one of the first major accomplishments for the IBP's director when she first took charge of the organization.

> What IBM wanted was for their people – their managers and lead personnel – to go from being generalists to specialists in owning their piece of the operation, so to speak. So, they wanted them to earn an associates degree; but they also wanted a lot of training components, also. Well, we had a learning center at Evergreen that was open-entry, open-exit. I worked with the V.P. of Instruction there, who was from a college back east, and who immediately picked up on the idea. She designed the program, which ran for five years. It was very successful, both financially and from the PR standpoint. (9)

Shortly thereafter, the IBP – in conjunction with the San Jose City campus this time – developed a variation of the IBM program that was picked up by Intel, and which ultimately resulted in that company giving the San Jose campus the gift of clean-room, where students train in the manufacturing of semiconductor – a very substantial gift, and another indication of the kinds of benefits that can accrue to a

district from effective marketing and program design at the contract education level (3).

A fifth important aspect of the IBP is the professional level of instruction delivered in the execution of its contracts. All instruction provided by the IBP is delivered using highly qualified, specially contracted personnel. Sometimes these instructors are recruited from the District's campuses, but they are also recruited from other educational institutions, and might even be contracted from other private sector affiliations. Regardless of where they come from, instructors are recruited on the basis of their relevant skills, professional demeanor, and (where required) traditional academic credentials. Great care is used to select personnel who are not only content experts and effective classroom presenters, but who also have the kind of professional service-orientation required in order to extend the level of customer service across all components of the contract. These are a rare combination of skills *and* attitudes, and the IBP's director makes the point that they are not always easily found within the instructional ranks on the campuses.

> Many of them (faculty) got right out of high school, went right into college, got their degrees, and then they went right into teaching. They've never had to make a buck on their own, you know? So, they look at people like me, and they say, "What's the matter with her? Boy, is she hard hearted – all she thinks about is the all American buck," you know? It's not about quality and blah, blah, blah…but we do rely a lot on the colleges…an important part of the vision for the IBP when it first started was to take faculty out and help them see what the real world is like…faculty development…and that happens. But when you start running an organization this size, it doesn't happen as much as you'd like for it to. (9)

Customer Base

The IBP is a successful provider of contract education services to a wide range of customers, including public as well as private sector organizations. The private sector customers tend to be medium to large in size, as the cost of contract education can be expensive relative to the kinds of training and development budgets that the typical corporation is able (or willing) to devote to the advancement of their personnel. The list of past and present IBP customers (Institute for Business Performance [IBP], 2000) reads like a who's-who of major corporations and key public service organizations in the Silicon Valley, and includes Hewlett-Packard and Sony (contracts for instruction in Japanese conversation and culture); Ford Motor Company (contracts in automotive repair technology); IBM (creation of a 24 hour learning center with courses in algebra, English, computer technology, blueprint reading, and statistical process control); and the Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute (contract for web design course).

While the kinds of organizations and contracts the IBP works with can vary across a wide spectrum, the development of training programs for both private and public organizations usually involves four basic steps:

1. Research – The first step is to determine what employee performance is needed to achieve the business goals. The Account Manager or Sales Coordinator conducts this needs-analysis step in concert with the customer. However, in certain

situations, the process may also include the use of an outside performance consultant and/or key personnel from the customer's operation. Typically, the emphasis in a needs analysis is placed on the performance aspects of training, which makes it "easier for the customer to relate the cost of the contract to specific and predetermined corporate outcomes" (9).

2. Development – The second step is to identify possible training and work environment solutions. Here again, the work is highly collaborative between the IBP and the customer. "We build and deliver a comprehensive presentation out of our needs analysis, and it's complete down to the bio of the instructor and the cost of the paper clips he or she will be using" (9).

3. Implementation – The third step is to implement the program. "We'll train 'em anywhere…We have the ability to flex to their location, our location, or even to the campuses. If it's a contract involving technology, and they are short of stations, we usually run it out of our classrooms at the IBP. If it's too big for that, then we try to work it out with one of the campuses" (9).

4. Measuring impact – Most contract education or training services provided to corporate clients are linked to well defined performance outcomes, so post-instructional assessment of effectiveness plays a critical role in the IBP process. Traditional pre- and post-test instruments are sometimes used, and standard instructional effectiveness surveys are used in virtually every contract. This has extra benefits, explains the sales coordinator. "The post instruction assessment process also provides us with an opportunity to continue the

development of the IBP-Customer relationship, which is important to us because we pride ourselves on the amount of repeat business we get" (10).

IBP's relationship with the Finance and Business Operations department at Lockheed–Martin is illustrative of the process outlined above. At one time this department conducted virtually all of its training internally, but in the late 1990's, financial conditions within the company were such that outsourcing that training began to make serious sense. In the beginning the department used a commercial training enterprise. However, in the latter portion of 2000, the IBP was able to garner its first small contract involving 2 courses, and by March of 2001 it was able to secure a second set of similar offerings. In August of 2001, a third contract was negotiated, which brought the total number of trainees to fifty. Today business with the IBP figures significantly in the department's training budget for next year (14), and for three basic reasons: (a) it has proven to be more affordable than the company's initial internal and external approaches; (b) it has delivered more reliable (and therefore more effective) training products; and (c) it has given the management of the department the opportunity to support an element of the community at the same time as it has been able to receive a valuable service.

"All things being equal, I would have chosen the IBP," says the manager of the department. "I grew up in this area, and I have a daughter who goes to a community college near here. Doing business with the IBP is a way for Lockheed-Martin to support the community. Besides," he adds, "all things weren't equal.

When it was all said and done, the IBP simply gave me better service at a better price " (14).

Public Business

Relationships with public service organizations follow similar pathways. For example, what began several years ago as a small contract designed to help Santa Clara County with some basic ESL training issues has expanded into a variety of other contracts that are focused on both the soft and hard skills that government personnel in all functional areas might require. The account manager for the IBP emphasizes the current generally high demand for ESL and other similar skills:

> The majority of things we do for the County, and for most of our other customers as well, are developed around "soft skills," like ESL skills. However, we are also a Microsoft Solution provider, so we do a lot of technical training as well...for the county, as an example, we do a good percentage of their computer training. (Courses in) Access, Power Point, Excel, and such are all being developed at our place and brought to the county's facilities for delivery. (10)

The services the IBP provides to Santa Clara County are twofold. First, they are designed to help the county solve a problem that is becoming increasingly important for public service organizations in the Silicon Valley, and all around the country, for that matter. The Senior Training and Staff Development Specialist for the County explains:

> In the state of California, we have a huge population of diverse individuals who are county workers, and whose first language is not English. This usually means that their basic skills – like

> pronunciation, and basic writing skills, for example – are very limited. Actually, in some cases they are non-existent. So, letters go out from the county that are very poorly written, even embarrassingly so, and all kinds of breakdowns in communications occur. Someone from the recorder's office just told me earlier today that some Santa Clara residents went to the recorder's office to record a birth or death or something like that, and the clerk behind the counter spoke so little English that they ultimately had to track down the supervisor just in order to fill out some basic paperwork. (15)

Second, the IBP coordinates and/or provides credit and/or not-for-credit courses for the county's employees. These courses cover a wide range of content areas including technical training in computer based productivity packages, leadership classes and seminars, and a complete associate degree program. The associate degree program, dubbed the "Corporate College/Accelerated Degree" by the IBP, is conducted in collaboration with the District's campuses, and delivered on county premises. This makes it possible for county employees to attend college right in their own area of employment, which is a tremendous convenience in an area like the Silicon Valley (16).

In addition to providing services to local-area public sector institutions, the IBP is also actively involved in personnel training, retraining, and development activities with the San Jose/Silicon Valley Workforce Investment Board (WIB). Established as part of California's overall response to the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, the WIB controls the grants, various programs, and "one-stop service centers" (Fagnoni, 2000) in San Jose. The IBP's sales coordinator explains how the one stops work.

> A one stop center is where they work with people who are unemployed, or who have been dislocated – meaning they have been laid off from work. It's all about getting the client all set up with a counselor. The counselor will do an assessment, and if a person is qualified to go through the WIA program, they can benefit from a lot of different training services. Maybe you're having a hard time finding work. They'll have computers there so you can do a job search on the Internet. They'll have placement information, too. The good thing about it is you know you have a place to go to – it's kind of like having an office and office assistance. (11)

Through a grant received from the WIB, the sales coordinator acts as an outreach specialist for part of her workweek. "The grant requires that 50% of my time is outreach – joining associations, or marketing – you know, letting people know we are out there. It's a community service, and the services are free so long as you qualify" (10). The other half of the time, the sales coordinator works at the IBP offices, "with the clients that come through on professional development, trying to sell my classes – Networking, Office Suite, Certified Internet Web Master. I'm the one who works with the students on site" (10).

The division of the IBP's client base into what is essentially a tripartite structure that is divided a generally even degree between programs and services for: (a) private business, (b) local-area public sector agencies, and (c) state funded grant-based programs was the result of a conscious decision by the director. "After the terrible financial problems we had in the early '90s, I promised myself we would never be totally dependant on a single big client again" (9).

<u>To Catch a Mouse</u>

Quality advertising is an integral aspect of the IBP's professional approach toward its organizational development and growth. Accordingly, they follow the time honored advertising axiom, "To catch a mouse, you have to look like a cheese" (anonymous), and produce brochures and other collateral materials that are designed and produced in the kind of first-class manner to which their clientele can relate (12). These materials are used as direct-mail pieces and informational handouts, and are notable for both the professionalism of their design and the quality of their reproduction.

Two other important parts of the IBP's self-promotion efforts are web-based. First, there is their own website at www.ifbp.org, which provides visitors with very straightforward and easily navigated access to key information about the organization. Then there is the ED>Net (Economic Development Network) connection. ED>Net is a coordinated group of projects funded by the state of California, and is designed to provide the community colleges and their various publics with web based links and other resources that can facilitate communications among them (12). A component of ED>Net is the Business & Workforce Performance Improvement / Contract Education Initiative (BWPI), a grant based program that is currently hosted by the SJECCD and housed in the offices of the IBP. The BWPI provides a variety of services to both the community colleges and the general public (including corporate entities) designed to enhance the overall effectiveness and growth of contract education in California (Gaertner, Hammer, Swenson, Ward & Garza, 2000, p. 2).

While the BWPI serves a total of 26 California community colleges, having the liaison officer for this program located just down the hall from the IBP's Account Supervisor makes it an even more useful resource. The Economic Development Liaison for the BWPI explains the key features of the program as being "multiple and diverse" (12):

> We go to regional trade shows or association meetings of human resources managers from both the private and public sector and make them aware that we can be a resource for the training of their employees...we also go to meetings related to training associations... we use the institutional brochures at the trade shows, and we also have a direct mail campaign we've done...That campaign went to individuals that were identified as being either the CEOs or the HR persons from 12,000 businesses in the Bay area, businesses and any other organizations with 50 or more employees. It was a three-month campaign, and it's been very well received by both the community and the colleges involved. (12)

Purse Strings

Contract education programs in California are cost-recovery mandated, meaning that they need to perform successfully enough to at least break even in their business endeavors. They are also allowed under California law to be, in a sense at least, profitable. For example, if a contract education program makes more money than it takes to recover its costs of operation, the District may use those funds to enhance the contract education program itself. It may also use that overage to offset other district costs should it so choose (1). It is possible that the decision to set the IBP up as an entity separated from the two campuses in the District was driven by such considerations:

> If you were to go back in history and look at some of the initial memos from when the IBP was established, the notion clearly was that it was going to be able to generate cash that was then going to be plowed back into the colleges…that was the whole notion behind the business model…(6)

The potential to generate revenues over and above the apportionment is precisely what makes contract education so appealing to certain elements of the community college structure (Bailey & Averianova, 1998, p. 26). This can be a double edged sword, however, as the District discovered in the early 1990's when California walked into one of the worst statewide recessions ever, and the IBP had to be supported for awhile using resources that might otherwise have been used by the campuses.

But other factors may also have played an important part in the original separation. Writing about the character of San Jose City College between 1960 and 1990, Grosz (1996) calls it "a model of dysfunctionality"(p. 282), and suggests that a "spirit of confrontation between faculty and administration" (p. 286) could be found throughout the District "well into the 1990's" (p. 150). Grosz also suggests that it was this spirit, and an attendant "lack of trust" (p. 150) that may have contributed significantly to the District's decision to separate the IBP from the campuses in the first place.

"Well, yes, there *was* a lot of resistance in the beginning, and having the IBP off on its own probably increased the level of aggravation a little," comments the IBP's director (9) who began working as part of the sales force for the IBP in1988, then went on to become its director in 1995:

> Mostly it manifested itself in District meetings and Board meetings, where (various detractors) would say things like, "We don't want to be doing this thing; it's inferior; the quality's no good; blah, blah, blah," that sort of thing. Also, things were "OK" when we had money; but when we didn't have money (the detractors) claimed we were a drain on the District and were taking money away from other, more important programs. That would have been, true, too, except that for several years prior to the hard times in 1992, we had been putting a lot of extra dollars back into the colleges. That doesn't get talked about a lot. (9)

The quality and appearance of the IBP's commercial location, the business model it uses to pursue its activities, and the significant level of autonomy it has been allowed to enjoy up until new, have made it unique in California contract education circles (12; 16). However, partly because of the expense of maintaining it in its current setting, and partly because of the desire to have it more clearly integrated into the activities of the two-campus District, it is possible that, in a couple of years, the IBP may find itself housed in a new building being erected on the San Jose campus (3).

The Campuses – Retrenched/Retrenching

The SJECCD is one of 71 multi-campus community college districts in California. With approximately 18,000 students on its two campuses, SJECCD is middle sized for California. As is the case with most California multi-campus districts, the District's two campuses – Evergreen Valley Community College and San Jose City Community college – are situated in areas of San Jose that differ greatly with respect to their economic and cultural characteristics.

New School

Evergreen Valley Community College (Evergreen or EVC) is located "on a picturesque 175 acre site in the Eastern foothills of San Jose" (Evergreen Valley College, 2001, p. vii). It's an upscale area of the Silicon Valley, and the surrounding neighborhoods are clean, quiet, and definitely middle to upper-middle level residential. The campus itself has a broad, open, and sunny kind of feeling, and the landscaping is simple but effective. My first visit came during finals week, so the general mood of the students I chanced to encounter while I walked around the grounds was either pronounced tension or pronounced relief. These encounters also made me more aware of the significant diversity of the student body, particularly the racial and ethnic diversity. A lot of construction is currently underway on the campus, and the racket coming from pneumatic equipment and diesel engines somehow tends to accentuate the sort of exotic quality produced by the many different dialects of English I heard spoken as I made my way from the parking lot to the president's office.

Evergreen's doors opened to its first 3,000 students in September of 1975. Since then the physical growth of the campus has taken place in three major phases (1975, 1979, and 1988), with the most important of these taking place in 1979, a period in which the library, a large multi-purpose learning-resources facility, and a dozen other key structural areas were completed. In 1988, the South Bay Regional Public Safety Training Consortium moved from San Jose City College to a new facility at the Evergreen campus. The Consortium is a collaborative project

involving the SJECCD and other community college districts and provides training and educational facilities for students seeking careers in law enforcement. A $70 million facilities development project – a fourth major phase – is underway, and will provide students with additional learning and career development facilities (San Jose/Evergreen Community College District [SJECCD], 2001).

Evergreen is proud of its Silicon Valley location, which it credits with giving its students unique opportunities to network with high-tech industries. It is also very proud of its many workforce related programs, like the certificate and degree programs it developed for Honda. "Our Honda partnerships are a perfect example of how partnering with business can be a win-win for both the private and public sides of the picture," says the president of Evergreen (6). He continues:

> Honda and we partner to develop automotive technicians. They give us Honda cars – we have thirty brand new cars out there, not old clunkers. They give us diagnostic equipment, if we need it, and they provide extensive training for our faculty at their facility north of here…we work jointly with them to develop curriculum. So, the students come here, they get Honda certified training, and then are in the position to be able to develop personal relationships with Honda Dealers while still in school. Meanwhile, the dealer gets to look them over and see if this is somebody they might be interested in hiring, and many times there's a job waiting for the student at the end of their program. This is an example of a partnership in which Honda gives us the equipment and know-how we would otherwise not be able to buy – including 35 new cars – and we give them technicians that they very much need, that are trained to their meticulous standards. (6)

While doing business with business is an important aspect of Evergreen's efforts to fulfill the technical education aspect of the District's comprehensive community college mission, it is not always an easy task. "The main problem of

dealing with a corporate client," says a dean at Evergreen who has extensive experience in collaborating on a degree basis with private business, "is that they typically don't understand how long it takes for us to get curriculum through. Right now the county wants me to get some paralegal curriculum through, and they want it like this (snap), and they (the county) can't quite get it moved as fast as they want (7)." The dean goes on to site other facets of the problem. "One of the big problems right now, for example is that the Faculty Curriculum Committee doesn't meet through the summer. That is a real big problem" (7). Public sector partners are sometimes equally impatient: "It's almost as if they think I work for them, and that's all I do...(but) I handle 13 programs right now...about a fifth of the college...and I don't have an assistant" (7).

Because Evergreen came onto the community college scene much later than San Jose City College, its vocational programs are smaller in number and different in character than those found at its more mature sister. The Evergreen president explains how that legacy has shaped the campuses and the district.

> We're similar in size, but their emphasis on the vocational side is heavier than ours. City College is like 80 years old, and we are 25 years old, so they were the original college and they had all the vocational programs. When Evergreen was started...the main ones we got (from San Jose City) were CAD, Automotive, and Nursing. (San Jose) City College kept a lot of what I would call the more traditional vocational programs, like machining, and cosmetology, and things like that. So they have more – I don't know what you would call them, the "old style?" – vocational or trade school kind of programs, because that was their history. You probably heard that in recent years, they've gotten some really interesting things going with Intel? But historically they were the ones with the more traditional, metal-and-wood vocational style programs. (6)

Old School

San Jose City College (SJCC) was the first of the two community colleges in the District, and can trace its lineage back to 1921, when it first began to offer certain courses from its high school campus that were designed and conducted by San Jose State Teachers College (now San Jose State College), and which satisfied certain degree requirements for students who might wish to articulate from the high school to the state college. SJCC became part of the San Jose Unified School District in 1954, went on to become its own independent community college district in 1963, and formally took on the community college appellation when it was joined by Evergreen Valley community college in 1975.

The SJCC campus offers quite a physical contrast to its younger sister, Evergreen. The campus is located adjacent to a major freeway that runs through the Moorpark area of San Jose – an area that is dominated by middle to lower income neighborhoods. The neighborhood immediately around the campus is especially bleak in spots – I gave it a pretty good tour in the process of trying to find my way back to the campus on my own one day – and I found myself worried about my car and its contents when I was finally able to find an open slot in the lot.

The SJCC campus was built in 1953, and is largely made up of clusters of low buildings – many of which are portables that house the bulk of the administrative and student service personnel – surrounded by a heavy canopy of low hanging trees and overgrown bushes. When you enter the campus from any

one of its several parking lots, or even through the front entrance, most of the building details that meet your eye are stains, cracks, and globs of old paint. It seems an awfully dark place, at first, with litter present in most passageways and common areas, and is obviously suffering from years of neglect – probably a legacy of the chronic funding problems that have plagued it almost incessantly for more than four decades (Clark, 1960; Grosz, 1996; 4). The diversity of the students seems even more pronounced than at Evergreen, although statistically the major demographics for race and ethnicity are relatively comparable.

As you continue to tour the campus, and walk through the more recently constructed General Education Complex, you begin to discover a certain kind of charm to the layout and the landscaping. If the dollars necessary for anything beyond urgent repairs were to somehow become available, this campus could someday be returned to its former state as an "appealing environment" (Grosz, 1996, p. 69). And there are definitely plans on the table for this place that could head it in that direction. In 1998 a major local bond was passed that will result in the construction of a badly needed multi-story parking garage, a new Learning Resource Center, and a High Tech Center. These projects will be completed in the next couple of years, and will mark a major moment in the campus's long and sometimes turbulent history (1).

The vocational/occupational tradition is strong at SJCC, and they are no strangers to collaborative activity with private business (5). A typical example of that tradition is the long-standing working relationship they've had with Intel

Corporation. While the IBP can claim credit (9) for establishing the first important collaborative activities between the District and Intel, it was SJCC that was able to develop a long-term relationship with the giant semi-conductor manufacturer (5). Today SJCC offers the Semiconductor Manufacturing Technology program, which features "...hands-on training, cleanroom environment, integrated academic subjects, realistic assignments, simulated virtual-reality facilities, high-tech, and internships" (San Jose City Community College, 2000, p. 55). This program is offered as either a certificate or associate of science degree program, and Intel remains an active participant in its delivery. "We get a lot of wonderful support from them (Intel)," relates the president of SJCC. " They pay a lot of attention to us, they fund us with money and equipment, and they provide technical support to the program....and they help us develop the curriculum and staff, which is a great part of the relationship" (4). But vocational/occupational education represents only one facet of the SJCC mission, which the president is very quick to point out.

> I always tell people we have three basic functions here. One is to provide transfer education, the second is to provide remedial or foundation skills, and the third is to provide job skills to people. Those are the three main things we do, and...day in and day out I try to make sure everyone understands that we're not one or the other – we are all three... and people may want part of those services at one time, and then another part at another time. (4)

The comprehensive range of programs and services offered by SJCC reflects the fact that it's student body is extremely diverse. Statistics from the latest SJCC catalogue serve to illustrate "...the changing demographics of California's major racial/ethnic groups: 1 percent Native American, 7 percent African-

American, 25 percent Latino, 28 percent Asian, 4 percent Filipino and Pacific Islander, 18 percent Caucasian, 1 percent Middle-Eastern and 16 percent other or unknown" (San Jose City Community College, 2000). The diversity of SJCC's constituencies roughly follows the state's and "runs the entire gamut" (5), says SJCC's Dean of Applied Science.

> I have people here who are barely able to make ends meet...students living in their cars, and you try to get them employment or work when you hear about them...because the education is the only way out of a very desperate situation. But you also get people who are extremely successful in their careers, and are coming here because they want to stimulate themselves, self actualization folks...or they need some new skills to stay in or get a better job, so they come here to retrain. I think the bulk of our educational process works down toward the more basic level of helping people get started in a career...we get people from other countries who have been professionals where they came from. I had a student who had been a highly successful administrator in Vietnam who was coming through a re-training program in CAD. The language was the greatest difficulty he faced because he was an older gentleman and was having difficulty learning English. (5)

The issue of diversity – and the major implications that diversity carries relative to achieving the core components of the District's overarching mission – may be the glue that binds the two otherwise very different campuses together. For example, in the fall of 1999, "Asian students still comprise the largest ethnic group (approximately 42 percent in 1998-1999) at EVC (Evergreen)" (SJECCD, 2000), and SJCC's Asian student population stood at 44 percent in the same year. In 1999-2000, the number of Asian students at SJECC dropped somewhat, but Asians remain the dominant student group at the two community colleges, with Hispanic students making up approximately 28 and 29 percent of Evergreen's and SJCC's

populations respectively. The Vice Chancellor for Instruction notes that these demographics present a variety of planning challenges for the District.

> Of all students of color, 35 percent are first generation Americans. ESL's our single biggest department on both campuses and should stay that way for at least the foreseeable future. But is it a forever situation? Will immigration slow down? If it does, then the issues are finite. (2)

The District – A Larger Vista

The headquarters for the SJECCD are currently located in a few temporary buildings located on the northwest end of the Evergreen campus. It's clear that this area of Silicon Valley hasn't been in the grasp of the developers for too long because the concrete, stucco, and traffic noise have not completely displaced the fields, bushes, and birdsong. The ever-receding agricultural heritage of the Silicon Valley that previously dominated the countryside are still in evidence here and there. There's something immediately peaceful and soothing about the place, even though there is a major real estate development, with all of its attendant noise, taking place on a large piece of the campus property immediately adjacent to the southern end of the layout. Perhaps it's the fact that the District office complex still has vacant acreage on two of its sides that first promotes what eventually turns out to be a deceptive peace-and-tranquility feeling.

Those peaceful qualities vanish entirely the moment I step into the Chancellor's office, and get immediately replaced by the feeling of high-energy interests being quietly but seriously pursued. In spite of the temporary nature of the

quarters, and all the limitations that such a setting produces, the place feels like a successful business operation. It's particularly noticeable in the postures and movements of the various people working in the place, regardless of their positions – a bearing and energy level that, come to think of it, is common to quite a few of the people I've encountered at both the District's campuses and at the IBP.

The mission of the District is a comprehensive one, and the Chancellor articulates it in language that reflects both the past history of the community college and the main challenges of its future. "I see the community college as being sort of a modern-day 'Ellis Island' for people who are less fortunate… (that image) works for me because I came from a rural farm family, and I progressed to my current position through education…it's a way of having a chance to live the American dream" (1). She goes on to identify three core areas related to that mission.

> Workforce development is a big portion of our mission today. The state mandated us to focus on economic development in 1996, and workforce education is certainly an important part of that role. That's why our degree level vocational and technical programs are so important to us, and that's why the IBP is an essential part of our mission as well. But equally important to us is the transfer function. We work very hard to make articulation from our campuses to the University of California and California State college systems as seamless as possible. And then, finally, there's remediation, particularly remediation like ESL, related to serving the very diverse population of non-native speakers here in the (Silicon) Valley. (1)

Included in the Chancellor's perspective are community college functions that are typically found in the comprehensive community college mission: academic transfer preparation, vocational technical education, continuing

education, remedial education, and community service (Cohen & Brawer, 1989, p.16). However, it is clear that the Chancellor tends to think of it all in community terms:

> We are called the "community college," and for a good reason. I wouldn't expect to lead it in California in the same way someone else might lead back East. And I wouldn't expect to lead it here in the Silicon Valley the same way I might in some other area of the state, either. As a Chancellor, you have to listen to your community – all elements of it. (1)

The District is organized as an independent, multi-campus community college district and is principally governed by a Board of Trustees made up of seven members elected from the District's 303 square mile boundary, an area that includes more than 700,000 residents. The Chancellor, who is appointed by the Board, and who is responsible for the overall operation of both campuses and the IBP, has five key players in the upper level of the her District team: Two Vice-Chancellors – one for Administrative Services and one for Educational Services; two Associate Vice Chancellors – one for Research and Planning and one for Advancement and Enrollment Management; and the Chancellor's Executive Assistant. Below the District level are the two campus presidents and their respective organizations. The director of the IBP reports directly to the Chancellor, but is not on the same level organizationally as the presidents (3).

Operating as a community college district in California's Silicon Valley is a complex and difficult endeavor, partly because of the ongoing funding issues involved, but also because of certain trends that are extreme, even for California.

For example, in a planning document for a recent District's annual planning retreat (Kangas, Budros, Yoshioka, 2000), a number of key statistics and their trends were identified. In the remainder of this decade, California's community colleges must anticipate the need to help serve as many as half million new students. This will present a tremendous challenge for the state's already chronically under-funded community college system, and has led to recommendations from various groups that run the gamut from abolishing all community college districts in favor of a state operated two-year college system, to increasing the use of distance learning via the internet and satellite campuses (Benjamin & Carroll, 1999).

Then there's the steady rise in California birth rates, and the continuing high immigration rates. These rates indicate that the state can anticipate a 52 percent growth in its population by 2025. In addition to increasing the overall numbers of students who will be looking for post-secondary education, these new numbers will add significantly to the state's already overburdened social services, which will, in turn, reduce its ability to create increased levels of funding for all of education. With its 347, 201 foreign-born residents (1990 Census), Santa Clara County, site of the SJECCD, is already listed as fourth in the state, ahead of even San Francisco (Kangas, Budros, Yoshioka, 2000).

Finally, while the current recession will have a dramatic and profoundly negative short-term impact on the economic condition of the Silicon Valley, the workforce gap that has been a long standing problem for the region is not likely to be significantly diminished. Since 1995 (end of the last major recession in

California) and 2000, the gap had grown to include about one-third of the high-tech industry demand (Kangas, Budros, Yoshioka, 2000). Caused partly by the tremendous rate of technological change in manufacturing, and partly by the increasingly low level of hard and soft skills found in the workforce, that gap is likely to return with a vengeance once the current recession abates (16), unless the educational system in California can do something to turn those skills around.

The combination of increased demands for access to higher education, increased demands from industry for skilled workers, and the ever-decreasing amounts of fiscal and other resources likely to be available for education at any level – let alone at the habitually under-funded community college level – creates some serious challenges for the District's leadership. Without question, the IBP will be expected to play a significant role in meeting those challenges (3).

IBP As Priority

An indication of how important the IBP is to the District can be seen in the fact that its activities have been included in the Governing Board's Priorities (SJECCD 2000-2001). Specifically, the IBP will be involved in meeting key aspects of several "Community Trends." For instance, "Trend III: The social and economic structure of our community exhibits a wealth/poverty gap." The IBP will be part of the District's plans to "...create intensive workforce training programs for welfare-to-work and other low-income students...Encourage a 'lifelong learning' approach within all (the District's) programs...Continually update and

enhance workforce offerings." The IBP will also figure significantly in meeting "Trend V: Organizational structures need to be flexible and responsive." In 2003 the IBP will relocate its offices to the new High Tech Center being built on the SJCC campus, a move that is calculated to decrease its cost of operations and increase the degree and effectiveness of its collaborative activities with the two campuses (3).

From the Chancellor's perspective, the IBP is as much or more about the community service aspect of the comprehensive community college mission as it is about the potential development of extra revenues for the District.

> I don't think of the IBP as a moneymaking operation just designed to help support the district...that was an assumption that was perpetuated years ago, and people in all employment categories thought of it that way. So it has been my practice during my tenure that when people talk like that, I correct them. That's not why we have the IBP or why we want to see it grow. Training the working public is an integral part of our mission, and it's just as important if you're someone who's 40 and your job changes and you need to come to us to get some updated skills, as it is when you're 18 or 19 and you're just starting an Associate of Arts programs. In no uncertain terms, the institute is an integral part of the District and its larger mission, community service. (1)

At the same time, the Chancellor is realistic about the need for the IBP to pay its own way. "We currently get no extra apportionment for things the IBP does, so if it doesn't at least cover its operational costs, and provide a solid basis for its own growth, we won't be able to afford it" (1).

Classic Problems

The IBP clearly figures in the District's overall strategic planning, but it isn't free from having to deal with many of the internal problems that historically plague contract education programs (Dougherty & Bakia, 2000). Still, while faculty at the college – both traditional liberal-arts and contemporary technical faculty – may sometimes question the philosophy of the enterprise or the efficacy of its processes (8); while the faculty senate, in its determination to protect the integrity of the curriculum, may sometimes seem to move on program approvals at a maddeningly slow snails pace (9); while administrators at the two campuses might occasionally wish that the contract enterprise could be more of a profit-center than just an important community service (6); and while the California community college system still tries to find a way through the funding issues inherent in California's higher education system (Benjamin & Carroll, 1999), the IBP appears to be enjoying a brief moment of relative budgetary and operational calm (9). But, all that calm could go away in an instant: The current director, a veteran of almost thirty years in the community college system – as a student, an employee, and as an administrator – is retiring.

> Well, I never have any serious problems with the Institute, and a lot of the credit for that has to go to the (director). She's good with the presidents, she's a really good communicator, and she's not selfish. She'll say to a client, "You know, this would benefit your people more if they took it for credit. We really ought to run it through the colleges." And then she'll call one of the colleges and work it out,

even though it really isn't her job to do that. We are really going to miss her. (1)

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, INSIGHTS, AND OBSERVATIONS

I began this study "from a worried stance." At issue for me was the relationship between the community college – an instrument of the Public Trust – and the Private Interest, meaning primarily the corporate for-profit community within which the community college operates. Acknowledging from the outset that the community college embodies the dualism of the Public Trust / Private Interest that has been an essential characteristic of American education since the Revolution (Cohen, 1998, p. 54; Pangle and Pangle, 1993, p. 101), I accepted the notion of an extremely close working relationship between the community college and the private businesses within its community. This is to say that I did not find the relationship between the community college and the private businesses it helps support to be – in and of itself – a dichotomy, anymore than I believed that the concepts of social responsibility and self-interest might be mutually exclusive. However, my concerns centered on the *degree* to which such an involvement with Private Interest might impinge on the community college's ability, or even interest, in protecting the Public Trust.

The traditionally comprehensive mission of the community college figured predominantly in my concerns. I felt that the maintenance of a broad and multi-faceted mission was necessary, if the community college was to be truly responsive to the educational and training needs of the *total* community, not just those of the community's Private Interest (Bogue, 1950, p. 49). I wondered if the increasingly

dominant position that the vocational/occupational function occupies in many community colleges (Dougherty, 1984, p. 191) might be eroding the other functions of the community college and, in the process, might be reducing the community college's effectiveness as an instrument of the Public Trust.

Some of these concerns were elevated by the possibility that three other factors could play a major role in driving the community college into a position in which the balance between its preservation of the Public Trust and the advancement of the Private Interest might shift too significantly towards the latter. The first of these factors was the issue of funding, and the issues facing California's community colleges quickly became part of my major focus: Clearly the demand for access is outstripping the capacity for supply within the existing operational structures and funding schemes utilized by California's community college system (Benjamin & Carroll, 1999).

Second, the growing importance of the community college's position relative to the workforce needs of the country has already lead to an increased emphasis on the vocational/occupational function (Cohen & Brawer, 1989; Dougherty, 1994; Lorenzo, 1994), an emphasis that seems likely to increase even more in the foreseeable future (Bragg, 2001). Some critics (Bailey & Averianova, 1998; Cohen and Brawer, 1989) even suggest that this growth has played a major role in the decline of the transfer function, which in turn may have diminished the degree to which the community college mission is truly comprehensive.

Third, and directly related to the first and second pressures above, the pressure on community colleges to collaborate or "partner" (NAB, 2001) with private business is significant. These pressures develop internally, as part of the community college's response to shrinking resources, or as part of its response to developing the curriculum itself, and externally as an expression of the interests of parents and students, private businesses, and "relatively autonomous government, officials" (Dougherty, 1994, p. 183). As community colleges look for ways to develop alternative resources, and as private businesses continue to seek out economical ways of developing a more highly skilled workforce, the mutual attraction becomes increasingly irresistible. In reflecting on the convergence of these powerful forces – economic necessity, economic development, and the pressure to "partner" with business – I felt some kinship with the community college's Instrumentalists Critics, and their concerns that community colleges "function to finesse the contradictions between conflicting values in American society" (Dougherty, 1994, p. 20).

As I deepened the theoretical level of my study, I discovered that an important manifestation of the mutual attraction between the community college and the private sector could be found in the significant growth of community college contract education programs over the last three decades (Dougherty, 1994; Dougherty & Bakia, 2000). Operating outside the strictures imposed upon degree based vocational programs these entrepreneurial programs tend to look and act very much like the businesses they serve. The extreme business orientation of the

contract education enterprise is a community college cultural paradigm of its own (Levin, 1997, pp. 12-16), one that tends to be in conflict with the dominant cultural paradigm(s) characteristic of other functional areas within the community college. The merging of the business paradigm with the other cultural paradigm(s) within the community college must lead to a number of important practical and philosophical issues for the leadership, I reasoned. By studying the relationship between the IBP and the other functional areas within the SJECCD, I hoped to find out what those might be, and how they might be managed. Perhaps, in the process, I would gain valuable insights into my concerns regarding the community college's role in preserving the Public Trust and advancing the Private Interest.

Merging Theory With Practice

This study has progressed along three pathways, all of which tend towards the same destination: a fundamental understanding of the issues faced by community colleges as they attempt to deal with increasing pressures to advance the economic development agendas of their communities: The study develops from a lived experience that comes from the review of the literature; the lived experience gained from the fieldwork; and the lived experience of "reflection" – the resurrection of the first two pathways within a critical framework of caring (Heidegger, 1962, p. 237). At one time or another these pathways overlap, diverge, and intersect; but at all times they are meanders intended to delineate, in their own strange way, the horizon of the researcher's understanding. The content and

organization of the concluding portions of the study have been crafted with that concept in mind.

Emergent Issues

From the theoretical context provided by the literature (e.g., Augustine & Rosevear, 1998; Benjamin & Carroll, 1999; Barber et al, 1998; Dougherty & Bakia, 2000, Levin, 1997; and many others) emerge a variety of practical and philosophical issues encountered by community colleges and their contract education programs as they go about the business of collaborating with private business and other organizations within their communities. Some issues develop internally from perceptions on the part of community college personnel that contract education programs on their campuses may be "getting resources at the expense of regular college programs, taking students away from regular programs, making inadequate use of regular faculty, or exercising too much control over curriculum" (Dougherty & Bakia, p. 231). Other issues develop both internally and externally and arise from concerns about the possible impact that contract education programs might have on the traditionally comprehensive community college mission itself:

> Traditionally, the primary purposes of American education have been as much about cultivating citizenship as serving economic efficiency. But as community colleges ardently pursue a strong connection between business and the economy, their interest in the traditional tasks of schools may attenuate. (Dougherty & Bakia, p. 233)

Dougherty and Bakia (2000) theorize that two mechanisms may be involved in this kind of attenuation process: change in attitude or cultural perspective, and the loss of administrative attention. Involvement in contract education can reshape the attitudes of community college faculty and administrators in a way that makes them think of education as being almost entirely centered on job preparation. These reshaped attitudes are then "carried back into traditional areas of the curriculum (and administration)" (Dougherty & Bakia, p. 233). Administrative attention is further impacted "because the administrator's time and attention are finite," (Dougherty & Bakia, p. 234):

> The more time they (administrators) devote to expanding contract education, the less time they have to devote to such traditional missions as education for citizenship, providing access to four-year colleges, and serving under prepared students (Cohen & Brawer, 1996, chaps. 9-12; Grubb et al, 1997, p.36; Pincus, 1989, p. 880). The transfer program may particularly feel the effects of a loss of administrative attention. (Dougherty & Bakia, p.235)

Shared Resources

The "data" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998, p. 106) gleaned from the field portion of this study resonates with many of the theoretical structures discussed in the literature, particularly those described by Dougherty and Bakia (2000). For example, the sharing of resources proved a major theme among my participants, and there is evidence that the IBP's poor performance during much of the early 1990's created tensions that remain in existence today. A dean from one of the campuses who joined the District in 1994 explains:

> In the late 80's, when the Institute (IBP) was first set up, the supposition was that it would be bringing in money hand over fist, and that money would go out to the colleges, or so I've heard. Naturally, the colleges had to front it (IBP) for the first few years. That's been a very sore point on both campuses for many years. People who have long enough histories with the District are still very bitter that the institute got money from them. Rightly or wrongly, some of them don't feel like they've ever seen anything in return. (5)

There are always at least two or three sides to every story, of course, and the District Chancellor's perspective on the issue of resources is worth noting:

> When I first came here (1995) people still insisted on looking at the Institute (IBP) as being a sort of cash cow, instead as part of our mission to support the community. The District was taking money out of it (IBP) as fast as it could be produced. Then, when it (IBP) hit some market fluctuations, people said, 'Oh, well, let's just close it; we don't need it.' So, I went to bat for it, shaped up the budget, and finally got it on solid financial footing. We had a couple of bad years with it, and people griped about the strained budget; but I simply said, "We've *got to do it*, it's part of our mission. The workers we help the businesses and the county train are students too, and we owe it to them, just like we owe it to those kids just out of high school who walk through our doors looking for a college degree or a set of marketable technical skills." It was unpopular to support the Institute, but I knew we had to. And they've (the IBP) turned it around. This year I think they will start having a regular excess of income, not only to feed into improving themselves, but into even better outreach to the community. (1)

The IBP's director, who has been a part of the District's contract education efforts for over two decades, strikes a similar note when she talks about the success of the IBP prior to the early 1990's:

> We started very small – our first budget was just a few thousand, and I was a .5 FTE employee. Well, I guess because I didn't really know what I was doing, or how hard it was supposed to be, I just went out and started making calls. The next thing you know, I landed us a training contract with IBM for half a million bucks. Which was very interesting, because when I came back to the college, they said to

me, " Well, we can't do that!" And I said, "What do you mean, go out there and set up a learning center for their employees? I thought that's what you wanted us to do?" When I sold it, I mean, it was one of those pipe dream things. But I've always felt like if you have a vision, then you can make it come true, and I had the right people. I worked with one of the deans there, who also had this kind of vision, and was from a college back in the east, where they did this kind of thing. She designed the program, and it ended up running for five years. It started out as a 500K per year contract, and it went all the way up to 1.5M. That was a lot of money in 1988. (9)

Faculty Perceptions

The population for this study was limited, for the most part, to the upper administrative levels of the SJECCD and the IBP. However, I was able to interview a faculty member whose primary teaching responsibilities are in technologically oriented vocational areas. This faculty member has played a major role in the development of many of the degree-based collaborations with private business that the District currently enjoys. He has degrees in math and computer science, an MBA, and a law degree, and has worked extensively in industry, as well as in education. His effectiveness in developing collaborative programs with private business has given him a "special status" (Dougherty & Bakia, p. 230) with his dean and many of the other senior administrators in the District who are familiar with his work. He was able to provide some perspective on some of the issues that Dougherty and Bakia (2000) point out as being areas of concern to faculty on the "regular credit side of the community college" (Dougherty & Bakia, p. 231) when they deal with contract education programs.

> My critique is that the IBP has not worked (like it was supposed to) since it was separated from the colleges. In the beginning, it was so successful that they put it into its own category, and when they did that, it lost a lot of its credibility to everyone except the administrators. (8)

For this faculty member, credibility develops from an approach to collaboration with business that reflects an appreciation of business itself:

> I think businesses are surprised when they find out that my views about 'academic purity' and such are not what they might think. I am not concerned about that sort of thing. If they want the names of their corporations on the courses, I would be glad to put them there. There are (people) around here who don't want that kind of branding going on. But I think that brands are a market advantage for everyone – the students, the employers, and the (community) college. I think that these attitudes give us a lot of credibility because they show we are willing to work from their (business's) point of view. When I talk to business I'm talking in a technical and marketing language they understand. I'm not a trained salesman working for a commission, and I think that gives me the kind of credibility that is really important to businesses. (8)

The Vice Chancellor for Instruction takes a wider view, and sees contract education within a more global context. "I think that workforce development includes everything from what the for-profits (e.g., University of Phoenix) do, to the PhD generation of our colleges and universities. Contract education certainly figures into that kind of view" (2). The Vice Chancellor goes on to tie the IBP more closely into the overall community college mission, even as he also identifies one of its major limitations:

> The IBP is focused, to a great extent, on what you might call "in-service education," while the degree programs on the campuses are focused primarily on "pre-service education." So, from the point of view of workforce development, by moving forward with the IBP, we have met some of the needs of business and industry for trained employees, and some of the more basic needs of segments of our society. But, if you look at our (the community college's) larger purpose in society, which is to provide *both* an educated and effective workforce, you can't get there real easily through contract training. Even so, I lean towards the community colleges as being the entity for doing this kind of work. (2)

Pressure to Partner

At the outset of this study, I was concerned about the degree to which the pressure on community colleges to partner more closely with private business might negatively impact the balance between the economic development components of their typically broad-based missions. Collaboration with private business figures very significantly in the day-to-day operations of the degree- and certificate-granting programs on both of the SJECCD's campuses (7; 8; 5). But the sense I developed from my various conversations on the subject was that collaboration with business is driven as much or more by internal interests at the community college (Dougherty, 1994) as it is by the businesses themselves. These interests appear to be focused less on the revenue potential of working with private business and more on the other values of collaboration. Observations by the president of Evergreen support this notion:

> Doing training for business is not just about making money, it is also about making relationships. That's the piece we at the campuses miss out on with the IBP off in its own quarters, and following a simple business plan. People who are in the fund-raising business like to say it's not about fund-raising, it's about 'friend-raising.' You don't know how that can be to the benefit of the college. Properly developed business clients are invaluable as sources of equipment, personnel for advisory committees, service on our foundation board, and can end up contributing in a dozen other ways. (6)

Still, business's interest in collaborating with community colleges is very high. Illustrative of this fact is Intel's involvement with over 45 community colleges around the country, including several in the Silicon Valley, as explained by the Workforce Development Manager for Intel's Santa Clara office.

> Our goal in these relationships is simple. The workforce situation here in the Silicon Valley is a very difficult one. There is an acute shortage of highly trained personnel, and importing that kind of talent is a very expensive proposition. If we can help the community colleges in their efforts to upgrade the quality of the workforce, we help ourselves. That's why we work so hard and spend so much money to develop close working relationships with all kinds of schools – from K-12 to universities. And, by the way, please don't call them "partnerships." Partnership suggests a formal kind of arrangement that we rarely engage in with schools. "Collaboration" is an OK term, and "relationship" is even better. (13)

Businesses collaborate with the community college campuses when degree programs are involved. But contracting with the IBP for non-credit courses or programs has its advantages. "We have many close relationships with businesses here on the San Jose Campus," explains the SJC president, "but sometimes bringing programs to our campus is a real problem for a business that might otherwise want to work directly with us" (4).

> Community colleges have their own "time machines," and they don't always work very well with the needs of businesses. We go by a calendar that is driven by semesters or quarters, and very rarely is it possible for things to happen if they are not counted in those kinds of units. We are pretty much shut down over the summer, so the businesses need to get their projects finished so faculty can go on vacation. It's not a good structure (degree programs) for business when they have to get things done in a couple weeks, or even a couple months. (4)

If all goes as planned, the IBP will be moving to his campus in 2003, and I think he is excited by the prospect.

> I can see some real benefit in the move, especially from the way it could increase the level of communication between the Institute (IBP) and the campuses. And I think it would increase our overall effectiveness in fulfilling our mission – because it is part of our mission to work with the community and providing training." (4)

The Mission Issue

Early in the development of this study I focused on the comprehensive mission of the community college and linked it to my conception of the Public Trust. My view was that the diversity of the community makes an equally diverse mission a requirement, if the community college is to fulfill its role as an instrument of the public trust. Writing about changes in the mission of the community college at the end of the 20th century, Levin (2000) concludes that it has shifted in a manner that places "less emphasis on education and more on training; less emphasis on community social needs and more on the economic needs of business and industry" (Levin, p.2). Bailey and Averianova (1998) note the "immense public investment" (Bailey & Averianova, p. 1) represented by community colleges, and then discuss how "strong financial pressures also push the colleges towards an emphasis on the vocational mission....community colleges have increasingly turned to workforce development as state funding and academic enrollments have leveled off or declined" (Bailey and Averianova, pp. 11-12). The president of San Jose City helped bring some perspective on both the issue of the community college mission and the concept of economic development: "What in the world is 'economic development'," he laughingly asked me? "We've (California) only had economic development added to our mission for the last few years, and I'm never totally sure that we – the community colleges, the legislature, or even business – are talking about the same thing all the time" (4).

His point is well taken. Parnell (1990) provides a broad definition of "economic development" that leaves room for the perspectives (and therefore the respective interpretations) of at least three major community stakeholders:

> Economic development has been traditionally defined as the process by which individuals or organization...invest capital in a community, generating or expanding industrial, commercial, or service activities and, thereby, increasing or retaining jobs...this process (requires) the participation of three diverse groups: public-private employers and labor; public and private community, technical, and junior colleges; and research universities. Working together they form ...(an) economic development triangle. (p. 68)

Bogue (1950) asserts that the functions performed by a given community college "are not wisely determined by assumptions, preconceived notions, or...by following the plans of other community institutions....The community college must be alert (to changes within the community)...and must constantly alter its curricula for functional efficiency" (Bogue, p. 46). The San Jose City president echoes this theme:

> The mission here (SJC) is more or less evenly divided into thirds: transfer, vocational/occupational, remedial. This split reflects the kind of community needs predominant in this area of San Jose. But if you were to go into the Longview (Washington) area, you'd find a community college there that basically exists to service the huge amount of heavy industry crammed into that area. They're not split 1/3, 1/3, 1/3 – they're about 75% workforce, and I don't see anything wrong with that. (4)

The president acknowledges that the situation in Longview is somewhat of an anomaly in terms of the comprehensive mission traditionally associated with the community college, but then reflects on some essential aspects of the mission, comprehensive or otherwise:

> What I've always felt was an appropriate approach to the mission is to understand that you (the community college) are a resource for *all* of your community. You're a resource for people who are trying to make it into the baccalaureate levels of education, but may not have the skills or the finances; you're a resource for people whose second language is English, or who may need other basic skills just to be able to take that first step into their first job, or into a lifetime of education; and you are a resource for the economic development needs of the community, which includes private industry, but also includes the non-profit businesses and organizations as well.(4)

I asked about the community college mission in almost every SJECCD office I visited, and virtually every response served to advance the concept that a community college's mission needs to be designed around the diverse needs of its community, and that economic development was typically a legitimate – but not overriding – community need. For the Chancellor, economic development – especially the occupational education and training aspects of it – is a natural extension of the traditional community college mission:

> It's a logical step or extension of what used to be what people thought of the traditional message of the community college – people come and take two years of work on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, get their associate degree, and then go off to finish college or go to work. But that excludes so many people and thinking about those folks is kind of what got my interest sparked in workforce education. As we move out of the industrial age, 80 to 85 percent of our people are going to need something more than a high school degree just to compete at all. So, workforce education fits in very nicely with my idea of the community college being sort of an educational Ellis Island for people who missed their opportunities in the past, who are now 30 or 40, working like crazy, and really aren't able to come back to a full time college program. (1)

Insights and Observations

Almost from the first day of my field research activities, I found myself being inexorably drawn into the more practical affairs of the SJECCD's efforts to promote, grow, and fully utilize the potential of its contract education program, the IBP. Perhaps my own entrepreneurial bent, my years of experience in private industry, and my equally long stint as an educator and administrator on the proprietary side of the educational tracks, have combined to make me especially receptive to the various issues that are involved in making a contract education program work effectively within the larger mission of the community college.

The Appeal of Contract Education

Dougherty (1994) asserts that a phenomenon known as "state relative autonomy theory" (pp. 273-286) is needed to fully explain: (a) the origins and expansion of the community college, and (b) the origins and accelerating importance of occupational education programs within the community college. Dougherty (pp. 183-189) speculates that state policies related to the growth of community colleges and the expansion of an economic development agenda through increased emphasis on occupational education programs cannot be entirely accounted for by "interest-group pressure" (Dougherty, p. 224) from students and their families, private business, or foundations. Of at least equal importance, says Dougherty are the values and self-interests of "relatively autonomous federal, state, and local officials (Dougherty, p. 225)."

> State legislators' and governors' support for occupational education has certainly been rooted in the belief that it serves the social good; that educational opportunity and economic growth are to the benefit of all. But there is reason to believe that this support has also been anchored in self-interest....state elected officials have a very lively interest in occupational education, for it promises to stimulate economic growth without the political cost of other means (Goodman, 1979: 25-31; O'Connor, 1973, 111-117). It does not require public employment or significant regulation of business investment decisions, both anathemas in a capitalist society, particularly one as distrustful as ours. (Dougherty, 1994, p. 226)

Community college officials also figure in Dougherty's (1994) concept of relative autonomy, and he sees their interest in occupational education as being "a way of reinforcing the political position of their vulnerable institutions" (Dougherty, p. 213). Occupational education has bolstered the community college's political position by creating new sources of revenue, and by bringing prestige through collaborations with big-name corporations – both of which tend to increase the support given to the community colleges by the public, private industry, and elected officials.

Dougherty's (1994) politically framed perspective (Bolman & Deal, 1997, p. 15) makes a lot of sense to me. But, I wonder if there are not at least two other equally important factors that make occupational education activities such as contract education programs attractive to top level community college administrators? First, by not being subject to the same regulatory pressures experienced by regular degree-based vocational programs, contract education provides its leadership with a tremendously high degree of flexibility (Dougherty & Bakia, 2000). The ability to rapidly and effectively customize curriculum – or to

create it almost on the spot, for that matter – to meet conditions in the rapidly changing workforce environment makes contract education a potentially powerful tool (10). This flexibility extends into convenience factors such as location, duration, and format of training – all of which take on considerable importance to employers and employees alike in the Silicon Valley (13; 16)

In addition to lending itself to the needs of private business, contract education's flexibility also makes it possible for the community college to address the personnel training and development needs of local area public service organizations. For example, the IBP's ability to respond rapidly and innovatively to the San Jose County's personnel development needs is a major selling point for the County's Senior Training and Staff Development Specialist:

> We get great service from the IBP right here in the County facilities. Our personnel are very diverse, and we provide an incredible range of services, so we are always developing different needs. We get English classes from them – writing skills stuff mostly, but the speech part as well. We also contract for technology offerings – some Internet, some HTML, but mostly basic Office stuff. We've even had them develop classes aimed at burnout prevention, goal setting, managing personal change…you name it. These needs come and go real fast, so we rely on them to turn around an idea in a very short time. (15)

Finally, because of the additional revenues they may potentially generate for the community college, contract education programs can be very attractive to administrators and faculty alike, and this fact certainly played a major role in the development of the IBP in the first place (1, 5, 6, 9). However, contract education programs focused on the goal of developing additional revenues from their fee-

based work with private businesses are every bit as vulnerable to the normal ebb and flow of the business economy as their clients are, witness the IBP's hard times during the heavy recession that gripped California in the early-to-mid 1990's (9). From my own perspective, rather than its potential to generate additional revenues, it is the flexibility of purpose and design inherent in the entrepreneurial stance and business-like structure peculiar to contract education that makes it such an interesting device. This flexibility provides the community college with "the ability to option, an essential capacity in times of dynamic change" (J. Staicoff, personal communication, 10 January 2001). I can see why top-level administrators might easily be attracted it, and the broad range of possibilities it presents with regard to meeting the various social service, economic development, and political agendas that are inherent in the community college mission.

Integration of Operations

It is not enough for the SJECCD to have the full support (3) of top level-administrators at the District and/or presidential level; in order to fully realize its potential, the IBP needs to develop a very close internal working relationship with as many other District departments as possible (Barber et al, 1998, p. 57; 4). Barber et al (p. 61) identify three broad sets of practices that are especially important in insuring a close internal relationship between the contract education program and its campus(es):

1. Develop and maintain mechanisms for communication with the president(s) and the Board of the two-year campus.

2. Coordinate services with campus programs and personnel.

3. Market the (contract education program's) achievements to other institutional departments.

While conversations with participants in this study confirmed that these practices are understood as being important, it is not clear that they are being pursued with a great deal of success. Even though participation in this study was limited to mostly upper levels of the administration, there remains enough of a range of experience – in terms of positions and length of tenure – to provide a small window into the bitter struggles between faculty and administration that Grosz (1996) indicates made San Jose City (and by inference, the District) "a model of dysfunctionalism" (Grosz, p. 282) in the late 1980's and early 1990's. When it moved to its current facilities in 1992, the IBP found itself occupying a central position in those struggles. Many of the individuals from that era remain employed in the SJECCD, and a couple of them were included in this study. According to the director of the IBP, the coordination between the IBP and the campuses has improved significantly since the mid 1990's, when the current Chancellor took office.

> It was pretty bad there, for a while. A lot of the faculty and even some of the administrators – particularly those who came into education in the 60s – had no respect for anything we tried to do with business. They'd say things like, "they're (business) not our customers," and they'd accuse us (IBP) of being terrible capitalists.

> But when the Chancellor came along a lot of that changed, and for the better. She's helped a lot of folks – including the Board (of Trustees) get used to us (IBP) by explaining what we do in terms of what she sees as the larger purpose of the District. Her leadership has really turned things around for us. (9)

Plans are to move the IBP to the San Jose City campus in 2003, and such a move could go a long way toward accomplishing the kind of integration that seems necessary (9) before the IBP can develop the kind of close working relationship with the campuses it needs to fully recognize its potential. From the SJC president's point of view, the relocation presents some opportunities for the District:

> I think that a big benefit from that kind of move would be that the kinds of exchanges involved in coordinating activities would take place more readily and easily, just because of the physical proximity. It's just natural that people would be seeing and talking to each other a whole lot more, and that kind of day-to-day contact is essential if we are going to see the campuses and the Institute (IBP) work better as a team. (4)

Coordination of effort with the campuses is a major issue for the IBP (9). When the IBP gets involved with a private business or a public agency, it is not uncommon for the relationship to end up involving both non-degree contract services and degree-based outcomes. For example, the IBP's work with Intel helped establish that company's long-time relationship with San Jose City, and the work done with San Jose County contributed to the development of the District's Accelerated Degree Program. But, in spite of the success with Intel, it is possible that campus personnel do not always realize that ready and reliable access to their degree programs is an essential part of the IBP's approach to servicing its clientele

(10). The director of the IBP describes what she believes is the major challenge involved:

> The continuing ongoing battle is when you need something done at one of the colleges involving for-credit curriculum or programs. I think a lot of it comes from the fact that corporate clients aren't interested in hearing that something they need to have can't be delivered when, where, and how they want it. They don't care about the fact that there's virtually no way to get curriculum approved in the summer, that a course ordinarily takes ten weeks instead of the eight that they have, or that regular working hours on the campus are whatever. What they want is an immediate and positive response, and they go someplace else when they can't have that. I don't think that many folks on the campus are interested in responding to those kinds of demands, but we (IBP) have to. (9)

Will bringing the IBP to the SJC campus resolve the kinds of communications and performance issues that have existed between the IBP and the campuses for at least the last decade? Even though it is clear that such an assumption exists on the part of the administrators involved, it is not clear to me that this will be the case, unless the move itself is accompanied by a concentrated and well-thought-out plan designed to merge the strong Business Culture (Levin, 1994) of the IBP with the more traditional organizational cultures on the campuses. As it has in the past, the Chancellor's leadership through that stage of the IBP's growth and development will probably be pivotal. As the IBP's director puts it:

> I've never seen a better leader than she is. What I really like about her is that she doesn't pull any punches, but she's never nasty about it either. She's OK with conflict, as long as it is constructive, so you can tell her what you think. But when she's heard enough and made up her mind, then that's that. The neat thing is she does it all with such class. (9)

Philosophical Issues

Dougherty (1994) advances the theory that issues related to the viability of the traditionally comprehensive community college mission, the expansion of the vocational/occupational education or training functions within that mission, and the governance of community colleges in general stem from the convergence of at least two major philosophical perspectives. The first of these is that of the Functionalist Advocate:

> These advocates describe the community college as serving several central needs of society: providing college opportunity, training middle level workers, and preserving the academic excellence of our universities....(the community college) inculcates the fundamental values and norms of society, prepares and certifies people for jobs, allows for social mobility, and creates new knowledge. (Dougherty, pp. 17-18)

The second perspective belongs to what Dougherty describes as the Instrumentalist Marxist Critics:

> These critics have stated a set of claims about the community college's origins and impact that forcefully contradict the advocate's positive evaluation of the institute. They argue that the community college upholds only in word, and vitiates in practice the ideal, of equality of opportunity. In their view, the community college's real social role is to reproduce the class inequities of capitalist society. (Dougherty, p. 18)

Both perspectives, says Dougherty (1994, p. 195), explain the growth of the community college's role in occupational education as being the result of pressure from outside special interest groups (e.g., students and parents, private business, and foundations). But Dougherty suggests that these perspectives are incomplete, and that a third factor, relative autonomy theory – the values and self interests of

politicians and community college officials – is needed to fully explain the continued growth of occupational education (Dougherty, p. 273). This means that the degree to which pressures aimed at increasing the economic development function of the community college may tend to attenuate interest in other features of the traditionally comprehensive community college mission is determined by the collective impact of special interest groups on politically-situated, relatively autonomous, politicians, officials, and community college administrators. Indeed, this would be the case with respect to pressures created in order to advance *any other* individual functional aspect of the community college mission.

Culture and Values

Levin's (1997) focus on organizational cultures ties in here, I think, at least with regard to where the value structures of those "relatively autonomous" community college officials and administrators might be coming from in any given situation. Levin explains that, "Four dominant cultures are articulated in the literature on community colleges as characterizing the values, purposes, organizational strategies, and history of these institutions" (Levin, p. 3): The first of these is the Traditional Culture:

> Organizational purpose is seen as reflective of environmental factors, such as social conflicts between individual upward mobility and the preservation of the social status quo...and institutional drive for legitimacy, prestige, and social status. College mission and goals focus largely upon the intellectual and cognitive development of students, on the traditional role of the institution as providing access to educational opportunities, largely through university transfer and *preparation for employment* (italics mine)...(Levin, p. 6)

A second generalization, the Service Culture, is focused on people, and is interested in initiating and/or maintaining the improvement of its students:

> ...the Service Culture nurtures those whom it serves and is dominated by student service personnel and those with student service and counseling backgrounds. Rather than emphasize cognitive development alone, these agents of student welfare see their role in the community college as, at one extreme, *"breaking the cycle of poverty and despair"* (italics mine), and in the main as promoting the interests of the students, particularly by upholding notions of equality and opportunity....Administrators are committed to the expansion of the mission...(Levin, p. 10)

Mission, vision, and values characterize the focus of a third model, the Hierarchical Culture, in which the concept of leadership is seen as embodied in a single leadership figure:

> Shaped by those who embrace and often extol somewhat nebulous and idealistic but motivational qualities of the community which include the pursuit of organizational excellence and success, the Hierarchical Culture redefines the community college as a redeeming institution, one potentially superior to other educational institutions because of its connection to social ideals, particularly to personal *achievement of the underprivileged* (italics mine). (Levin, p. 13)

The focus for the Business Culture is entrepreneurial, and operational emphasis is on a business-like approach towards all activities. This culture sees itself vulnerable to economic and social forces as being no different from business and industry:

> One major goal of the Business Culture is the procurement of resources. This orientation leads the institution to take an entrepreneurial stance, and to collaborate with business and industry. *Heavily involved in contract services, which may take the form of international education, workplace training, and business development* (italics mine), this culture functions to survive as an economically viable entity, whether through growth or downsizing, by effectively managing its resources, particularly its human resources. (Levin, pp. 16-17)

It is instructive to note that three of these cultural perspectives focus on broad social issues, as well as on some aspect of economic development (Parnell, 1990) as playing a crucial role in the advancement of its particular agenda – the fourth perspective, that of the Business Culture, does not.

Culture and Dualism

Levin (1997) notes that, "One of the most pervasive descriptions of the community college in the literature is 'dualistic'" (Levin, p. 17), and then goes on to say that this dualism may be attributable to the presence of multiple organizational cultures within most community colleges: "It is reasonable to assume that within a single (community college) there are diverse behaviors and goals as well as numerous belief systems or ideologies" (Levin, p. 17). His idea carries considerable force with me, because I am certain that all four of the organizational cultures he describes above were represented through the participants in this study.

Is one of these cultures dominant at SJECCD right now? I am not sure. My study is limited to mostly top-level administrators and some of their closest staff members, so a full appraisal of the District's total organizational culture is beyond the scope of this effort. Is this an important question? I think it is, because I believe that the degree to which SJECCD will be able to maintain its essentially tripartite version of the traditional community college mission is, to a large degree, dependant upon the values and traditions that are embraced by the dominant organizational culture of the District.

> The multiple cultures of the community college...indicate that several belief systems are likely to have presence in each community college, that there are diverse behaviors within the institution, and that organizational goals and actions of the community colleges will no doubt arise from the dynamics of what Mintzberg (1983) refers to as organizational power behaviors. (Levin, 1997, p. 16)

Under its current leadership, the SJECCD has been able to move its economic agenda forward in a manner that also includes the expansion – through contract education – of services to public sector organizations within the community. The IBP has a strategic plan that is built on three funding streams (9), only one of which is dependant upon contracts with private business. This plan makes sound sense practically because it keeps the IBP from putting all of its eggs into the volatile basket of Silicon Valley's private sector; but it also makes sound ideological and political sense, because it makes sure that the District has a way to meet a broader based set of community concerns. There's little doubt in my mind that the IBP's dualistic approach to its economic development mission is the result of conscious practical and ideological decisions made by the Chancellor and the Director of the IBP operating out of each of their own cultural perspectives (1; 9). As the Chancellor explained to me in one of our conversations, the IBP is focused on serving the needs of the entire community:

> ...In contrast to a lot of other folks, I don't think of the IBP strictly as a money making operation ... the IBP is an integral part of the (community college) mission, and we owe it to people of Silicon Valley to provide that kind of continuing education access...I'd insist on running it, even if the best we could ever do was to break even, and we will surely do better than that (1).

Study Outcomes

My study of the SJECCD and the IBP has given me with the opportunity to observe a unique and successful contract education program in action. It has helped me gain a deeper understanding of the practical and philosophical issues encountered by the District's top leadership in the day-to-day performance of their duties. This study has also helped me gain some important insights into the profound funding issues that face California today, and may face other major community college systems in the future. But, for all of that, this study has not significantly diminished my worries about the relationship between the community college and private business.

The SJECCD's approach to contract education reflects conscious decisions on the part of the Chancellor, the Director of the IBP, and other top level District administrators to focus the IBP's efforts on meeting agendas of importance to both the Public Trust and Private Interest segments of its community. These decisions were prompted by a deep respect for the traditionally comprehensive nature of the community college mission (1), and a high regard (9) for the efficiencies of a business orientation towards the delivery of contract services to the community. But, there is nothing inherent in the current structure of contract education programs in California that would prevent an administration with a different organizational culture from defining "community" in terms of a mission focused more exclusively on economic development. Indeed, the fact that the IBP is "a tub on its own bottom" (2) (e.g., its costs of operation are not covered as part of the SJECCD's regular apportionment), combined with the fact that cost-recovery is mandated of

California's contract education programs, could tend to force the District to focus on IBP's bottom line even more than it already does. Put in other words, the degree to which a community college balances the Public Trust and the Private Interest – at least where contract education and other collaborative activities with private businesses within the community are concerned – is largely a function of who is at the helm, and what community college values their organizational culture (Levin, 1994) has instilled in them. This (XYZ)

Public Trust / Private Interest

The duality of the Public Trust / Private Interest historically embodied in our nation's approach to education exists as a balance between those material, spiritual, and philosophical assets we share as *the people*, and our individual rights to engage in "the pell-mell pursuit of personal ambition" (Appleby, 2001, p. 256). The community college figures in this duality by being an instrument that is capable of protecting the former and advancing the latter. To some extent, this capacity is inherent in the community college's legal status as a public institution, a status that makes it responsive to the needs of its community. This status also affords considerable protection for the more prosaic aspects of the Public Trust (e.g., physical and monetary resources, and related processes).

By entering into close working relationships (collaborations) with elements of the Private Interest, the community college can meet three important objectives: (a) contribute to the advancement of the community's economic development needs; (b) meet the education, training, and retraining needs of constituents who might otherwise be denied access or opportunity to their portion of the American Dream; and (c) develop alternative funding and resource streams that can help offset shortfall in more traditional, tax supported revenues.

Contract education is emerging as a powerful tool in creating effective collaborations between community colleges and elements of the Private Interest. But the highly entrepreneurial nature of contract education programs tend to

develop from a cultural orientation found on community colleges that Levin (1994) describes as "the Business Culture." Among the four cultures characterized by Levin (pp. 12-16), the Business Culture is the only one that does not tend to value a broad social agenda (Levin, p. 17). This is not to imply that there is anything sinister or immoral about the Business Culture and the Private Interest it tends to cultivate, or that organizations dedicated to preserving the Public Trust should avoid any commerce with the Private Interest ("A Faculty Perspective," 1998, p. 17). However, the character of Private Interest (Heilbroner, 1999, p. 59) is such that it can only be described as being, in its essence, much like a great cat. Accordingly, even while the Private Interest should not be condemned for the rapaciousness of some of its natural inclinations, it should always be approached with a healthy respect, a considerable amount of caution, and not a little worry. I remain unsure about the degree to which personnel in the community colleges who may be interested in collaborating with elements of the Private Interest fully appreciate the implications of this metaphor.

More Research

In the process of completing this study, I discovered three areas in which I believe additional research could be very useful. The first of these involve the perceptions of those who lead or manage collaborations from the Private Trust side of the process. This perspective is more difficult to access than the perspective of the community colleges. The difficulties stem partly from the fact that a

community college's routine business is largely a matter of public record, while the day-to-day activities of a private business are much more proprietary in nature. Another contributing factor is the public-relations risks that most corporations must endure in order to open themselves up to the scrutiny of outside interests. Finally, as a result of being attacked by members of the educational establishment (e.g., "A Faculty Perspective," 1998), private businesses may tend to be a little distrustful of academic researchers. However, in spite of all those difficulties, such research could provide a more balanced view of what private business believes it has to gain from allying itself with community colleges through collaborative activities such as contract education. As one of the private sector participants in this study indicated, his involvement with the IBP was motivated as much by an interest in promoting the educational interests of the community, as it was to secure quality training for his employees (14). Gaining a more comprehensive grasp of the practical and philosophical issues faced by private businesses that collaborate with organizations pledged to the Public Trust could significantly impact practice in both quarters.

The organizational cultures on community college campuses represents a second potentially useful research opportunity for individuals interested in gaining a deeper insight into how decisions related to the management of contract education programs and other collaborative activities with private business are made. Levin's 1997 paper on the cultures of the community college reviews the literature on the subject, and advances the idea that there are at least four distinct organizational cultures found on community college: Traditional, Service, Hierarchical, and

Business. Levin provides both a functionalist and interpretive perspective, then goes on to suggest that "a blending and a contrast of both perspectives applied to a case study at a single site or multiple sites would show…a more valid view of the dynamics of organizational life" (Levin, 1997, p. 18). Levin links behavior with values, and suggest that through such a study, " We would learn what community college leaders are encouraged and socialized to become…and what actions they take in responding to (their) environment" (Levin, p. 18). The focus of my study has been on understanding issues faced by the SJECCD and the IBP, and the degree to which environmental conditions might influence those issues. A logical next step would be to study the SJECCD (or perhaps one of the other districts within the Silicon Valley) from an organizational culture perspective, and use that as an additional context within which to view the overarching issue of Public Trust / Private Interest.

Finally, a study that seeks to determine how the multiple constituencies of a community college perceive their day-to-day activities within the broader context of the Public Trust / Private Interest could be very enlightening. For example, a major limitation of my study has been its focus on the uppermost levels of the administration of the SJECCD and the IBP. This narrow focus has been able to highlight some of the issues related to contract education and other forms of collaboration between a community college district and its community, and has provided some insights into how those issues are framed within the context created by the activities of the SJECCD in support of the IBP. But necessarily excluded

from this study was any possibility of developing the perspectives of three important populations whose daily activities, interests, attitudes, and objectives are deeply entwined with the Districts collaborative activities: current students, past students, and trainers/teachers who have been involved in services provided by the IBP, or in other collaborative programs developed by the campuses. I can visualize both qualitative and quantitative studies focused on the perceptions and stories of these people – studies that could shed even more light on the dualism of the Public Trust / Private Interest that is part of the heritage and the future of the American community college.

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